

"We are realists... we dream the impossible" - Che



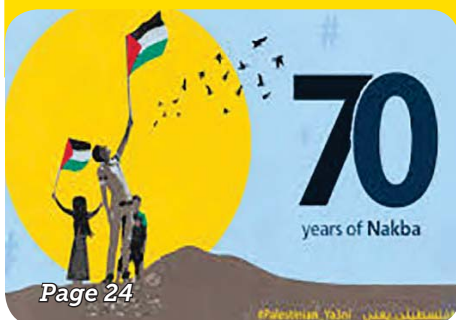
# Fire This Time!

## CUBA VS. HOMOPHOBIA & TRANSPHOBIA



Page 22

## PALESTINE



Page 24

## STOP BILL C-51 & 59!



Page 27

## FTT EYEWITNESSES IN VENEZUELA FOR ELECTIONS

Special Venezuela Section  
Pages 8-15 & 18-21



## STOP THE WAR ON YEMEN

Page 5

## REMEMBERING EAGLE EYES



Page 30

## THIS PIPELINE WILL NOT BE BUILT!



Page 2





The famous German poet and anti-Fascist activist Bertolt Brecht once wrote, "Bank robbery is an initiative of amateurs. True professionals establish a bank." In the case of Kinder Morgan, they found that a pipeline company would do the trick just as well. The Texas oil giant looks set to walk away from its controversial Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion project with all their expenses so far covered...by taxpayers. On top of that, we are also being forced to give them a cool extra few billion dollars in this \$4.5 billion deal where they unload their ageing, leaking pipeline to the government of Canada.

### Privatize the Profits, Socialize the Loses

Less than three weeks after Kinder Morgan announced it was suspending all "non-essential" spending on the project due to continual delays from the opposition, the government of Canada announced it would take it over. "The project became too risky for a commercial entity to go forward with it; that's what Kinder Morgan told us," Prime Minister Trudeau said during an interview with Bloomberg news after the announcement.

So, it's too risky for the billionaire oil executives who committed to the project in the first place, but somehow acceptable for taxpayers to be forced to assume the risk and losses they never agreed to?

We also need to be clear; it's not just \$4.5 billion. Finance Minister Bill Morneau refused to provide more specifics on the deal and the costs for the project going forward, but well-known economist and specialist on the Trans Mountain pipeline Robyn Allan provided her own assessment:

"By the time the expansion is built, the price tag for nationalizing the existing assets and building the expansion will cost Canadians upwards of \$15 - \$20 billion.

That's because the \$7.4 billion capital cost for the project estimated in February 2017 will likely exceed \$9 billion by the time an up to date budget is prepared. Then there is \$2.1 billion in financial assurances required for the land-based spill risk and \$1.5 billion Oceans Protection Plan for marine spill risk that Ottawa has already agreed to."

Morneau also conveniently failed to mention that two Kinder Morgan Canada Executives, Ian Anderson and David Safari, will earn \$1.5 million each in bonuses from the sale.



### What Could it Have Been Spent On?

Cindy Blackstock spent over a decade winning a case against the government of Canada at the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal. The 2016 ruling found that the government discriminated against Indigenous children on reserves in its chronic underfunding of their child welfare services compared to other children. She wrote this on Twitter following the announcement, "Canada could have ended under-funding of First Nations education, water, early childhood programs, domestic violence shelters and ensured no sick child was air transported alone in Quebec and more. Instead... they bought a pipeline."

Mike Hudema of Greenpeace Canada summarized some other alternatives as well, "The full \$4.5 billion could pay for the salaries of 60,000 nurses or 88,156 teachers. It could cover the average tuition costs of 684,827 students, put solar power systems on 180,000 homes, build 2045 wind turbines, or build the world's largest solar power plant 16 times over."

The bottom line is this: it took the government a few weeks to come up with \$15-20 billion (we would be more specific, but they aren't giving us the complete numbers) when there are so many other urgent issues in Canada which we are always told there aren't enough resources for. What's more, there are many more renewable energy options like wind and solar which provide more jobs per dollar invested.

### Facts on the Ground Do Not Change

The other bottom line is: the facts on the ground haven't changed for the stalled pipeline project. The widespread opposition which brought it to a crisis has not disappeared because the government spent our money to buy it. In fact, there are many more outraged by this massive and unnecessary government bailout of Texas billionaires.

Want proof? Over a thousand people rallied in Vancouver on 12 hours notice the day the announcement was made. This following almost daily actions in front of the Kinder Morgan tank farm in Burnaby, and the largest ever divestment action in Vancouver, where 1000 people marched to six of the banks funding the project. The day after the announcement, coordinated banner



drops were held across Vancouver and Burnaby. Then almost 1000 more protested in Victoria. A national day of action at the offices of Members of Parliament will also see over 100 actions taking place across Canada on a few days notice on Monday, June 4.

"The Trudeau authorization of a publicly funded corporate bailout of the Kinder Morgan pipeline and tanker project will lead to yet another victory by the Indigenous-led movement that has already stopped the Northern Gateway and Energy East tar sands pipeline projects. There is certainty that Indigenous people hold Title and Rights. Trudeau's false assurances are not fooling anyone, and Canadians are well aware that he has placed liability onto everyone in this country. Kinder Morgan got our message that without the consent of the many Nations along its path, the pipeline would not be built - now it's time for the Trudeau government to get the message," said Chief Judy Wilson, Neskonalith, Secwepemc Nation, and Secretary-Treasurer of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs (UBCIC).

"Approximately 100 First Nations in BC are affected by the proposed new pipeline and enormous increase in tanker traffic, but only 30 have signed agreements with Kinder Morgan, leaving more than two thirds who have not provided any form of consent," reminded the Treaty Alliance Against Tar Sands Expansion, a coalition

of 150 indigenous nations in Canada the U.S.

### In the Meantime?

What the government and pipeline supporters keep repeating is that they support the transition to renewable resources, but *in the meantime*, we need to keep people working, and *in the meantime*, we need to keep the economy going. None of these self-appointed experts have provided any meaningful proposal for how long this "meantime" is supposed to last, and how committing to 50 more years of Tar Sands development helps shorten it. In reality, it's clear their "meantime" will last as long as they can profit from oil consumption, regardless of the consequences.

In a detailed new article in the Globe and Mail titled, "The Great Canadian Climate Delusion" Thomas Homer-Dixon and Yonatan Strauch argue: "Continued investment in the oil sands generally, and in the Trans Mountain pipeline specifically, means Canada is doubling down on a no-win bet. We're betting that the world will fail to meet the reduction targets in the Paris Climate Agreement, thus needing more and more oil, including our expensive and polluting bitumen. We're betting, in other words, on climate disaster. If, however, the world finally gets its act together and significantly cuts emissions, then Canada will lose much of its investment in the oil sands and the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion because the first oil to be cut will be a higher-cost oil such as ours.

Heads or tails, we lose. That's the idiocy of it. We can't have our lucrative oil sands profits and a safe climate, too."

They continue: "This isn't just rhetoric. Canada has no plan to meet its 2030 Paris Agreement emission targets because it's virtually impossible to do so if the oil sands' output rises to Alberta's cap of 100 million tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions a year. Under the agreement, the global oil market won't have room for our oil, either. Scenarios to limit warming to 2 degrees, the Paris Agreement's bottom-line target, clearly show that oil demand must decline."

**They Attack Us Because They're Worried**



Kinder Morgan and the government of Canada are doubling down trying to squeeze out the opposition. After the sale was announced, they also won a BC Supreme Court Case to expand the scope of the 5-metre injunction zone around Kinder Morgan's Burnaby properties to all other locations and equipment facilities in the province. They also removed the 10-minute warning period given to protesters before police start making arrests. Over 200 people have already been arrested violating the previous injunction and blocking Kinder Morgan facilities.

While these announcements could be seen as disappointing, we need to understand that they couldn't be trying to continue to limit our freedoms if they weren't threatened by them. They more attack us, the more we can understand they feel threatened by us.

### We Are Here on Behalf of the Future

*"Those who take the most from the table, teach contentment. Those for whom the taxes are destined, demand sacrifice. Those who eat their fill, speak to the hungry, of wonderful times to come. Those who lead the country into the abyss, call ruling difficult, for ordinary folk."* - Bertolt Brecht

Our so-called leaders are leading us into catastrophe. Our real leaders are the Indigenous nations, the young people, the tens of thousands who keep showing up against this pipeline and proving there is a real will to stop it. This has been a successful formula, and we need to expand it to defeat this dirty Tar Sands pipeline project once and for all. They want to build a pipeline; we want to build a better world.

### No Bailout! No Pipeline!

**People and Planet Before Pipelines and Profit!**

Follow Thomas on Twitter: @thomasdavies59



"KM Pipeline? Don't Bank on It!" rally. May 12, 2018



# HEY TRUDEAU, YOUR PIPELINE HAS GOT TO GO!

*By Thomas Davies*

To say that May was a busy month for the movement to defeat the Kinder Morgan pipeline would be a big understatement. Groups across British Columbia, Canada, and even the United States made sure their public opposition was well known in the weeks leading up to Kinder Morgan's self-imposed deadline on whether to move forward with the controversial pipeline project. Climate Convergence Metro Vancouver was incredibly active as part of this, organizing at least one action a week and participating in many others as well.

On **May 12** Climate Convergence organized the largest Divestment action ever in Vancouver. 1000 people hit up six banks with large "Community Declarations" demanding they divest from the Kinder Morgan pipeline, the Law Courts where 200 water protectors are being charged with criminal contempt, and finished up at the offices of Kiewit-Ledcor - the primary contractor for building the pipeline in the Lower Mainland. Energy was incredibly high the entire time, and the "Kinder Morgan Pipeline? Don't Bank on It!" action received national media coverage as well.

This was also the first action for the reusable protest umbrellas which Climate Convergence members had painted in two previous "art builds". With each umbrella having its own large letter, "STOP KINDER MORGAN" stretched for more than 70 feet!

Following that, on **May 16** BROKE (Burnaby Residents Opposing Kinder Morgan Expansion), 350 Vancouver, and Protect the Inlet worked together to organize a "Die-In" blocking the gates of the Kinder Morgan Tank Farm - complete with sirens, hazardous material suits and stretchers. This was part of almost daily actions at the gates of the facility organized by Protect the Inlet, highlighting the diverse risks as well as opposition to the pipeline project. The Wilderness

Committee also organized four lunch hour actions at different Liberal Party MP offices while high school students walked out of classes in a national day of action on **May 24**.

As well, there was a large "land and sea" action blocking Kinder Morgan's marine terminal in Seattle on **May 21** and a Montreal rally of 1000 people led by Mohawk Chief Serge Simon and Innu Chief Jean-Charles Pietacho was held in Montreal on **May 27**.

When the Canadian government announced it would buy the pipeline and expansion project outright on **May 29**, 1000 people rallied on hours notice in Vancouver. The next day Climate Convergence organized three simultaneous banner drops during the busy afternoon rush hour. To say the response was enthusiastic would be an understatement. That night, young Albertans also disrupted a \$200 a plate dinner Finance Minister Bill Morneau was speaking at with large banners opposing the government's bailout of the pipeline project.

There are already many actions announced, and many more being planned in the coming months. It's going to be a long, hot summer of resistance and the Canadian government seems to have underestimated our resolve. Climate Convergence will continue to promote and organize grassroots mobilizations to defeat the pipeline once and for all.

Hey Trudeau - Your Pipeline Has Got to Go!

Money for Housing, Education and Clean Energy - Not Bailouts!

Follow Climate Convergence on Twitter:  
@Climate604

Follow Thomas on Twitter:  
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**Climate Convergence Banner Drop on Lions Gate Bridge. May 30, 2018**



**"Die-In" at Kinder Morgan Tank Farm Gates. May 16, 2018**



**Dawn Morrison, Secwepemc organizer and Founder/Director of the Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty speaks at May 12 "Don't Bank on It!" action.**



**Montreal Rally Against Kinder Morgan. May 27, 2018**



**Will George at 'Protect the Inlet' organized Vancouver Rally. May 29, 2018**



# STOP BOMBING YEMEN! OCCUPATION OF YEMEN! KILLING PEOPLE OF YEMEN! BLOCKADE OF YEMEN! WAR ON YEMEN!



*By Azza Rojbi*

“Over the past few weeks, we have seen an escalation in the conflict, growing restrictions on humanitarian action and a reduction in essential commercial imports. These factors are compounding the world’s worst humanitarian crisis at a time when millions of Yemenis face acute food insecurity and a possible resurgence of cholera or watery diarrhea. More than 22 million people in Yemen need humanitarian assistance or protection. Some 8.4 million people are severely food insecure and at risk of starvation. If conditions do not improve, a further 10 million people will fall into this category by the end of the year.”

*From a press briefing given on May 24, 2018, by Mark Lowcock, the United Nation’s emergency relief coordinator.*

This warning from the U.N. comes as the Saudi and United Arab Emirates coalition forces are preparing for an assault on the key Yemeni port city of Hodeida. The city is considered a lifeline for the war-ravaged country. Hodeida is Yemen’s third largest city, and about 90% of Yemen’s food and most of its medicine is imported through its port. The port is also used for receiving international shipment of humanitarian aid.

The U.N. and several human rights groups are warning that up to 250,000 people could die if the port city is attacked or besieged and the humanitarian crisis in the country will worsen drastically.

## **Who is responsible?**

This horrendous war in Yemen was started by the U.S.-backed Saudi-led coalition in March 2015. Using the pretence of restoring legitimacy and stability to the country, the Saudi government has intervened militarily in what was an internal conflict in Yemen. The Saudi government efforts to reinstate their deposed unpopular puppet, former President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi, failed miserably. Their so-called effort to bring back peace and stability in Yemen have created what the U.N. refers to as “the worst humanitarian crisis in the world.”

As the Saudi-led war and blockade on Yemen enters its fourth year, more than 14,000 people have been killed, and over 22,000 were injured according to the Yemeni Legal Centre for Rights and Development. Multiples horrific testimonies, photos and videos have shown the level of atrocities committed by the Saudi airstrikes from the air and their allied coalition forces on the ground in Yemen.

According to the Yemen Data Project, the Saudi-led coalition carried out 16,749 air raids in Yemen, or an average of 15 a day, between March 26, 2015, to March 25, 2018.

All this killing and brutality against the people of Yemen is committed by the Saudi-led coalition with the full backing

of the U.S., U.K., Canada and their other imperialist allies. The United States is providing logistical targeting support and mid-air refuelling to Saudi fighter jets and continues to restock the Saudi government with weapons to use in Yemen. The Canadian government has tried to wash its hands of the blood of the Yemeni people by donating to the United Nation’s humanitarian efforts, but an investigative article in the Toronto Star exposed that Canada, “exported \$284 million worth of weapons and military goods to the countries bombing Yemen”.

## **The Yemeni people will prevail**

Despite all of this, the Yemeni people continue to fight and protest against the foreign Saudi-led aggression on their country. They continue to share their stories, their art, their voices to uncover the lies and deceptions by the Saudi-led coalitions and their allies.

As peace-loving people around the world we must join Yemeni people in exposing the atrocities committed by the Saudi-led coalition and the complicity of the U.S., Canada and their imperialist allies. Let’s join the people of Yemen in standing up for their self-determination, sovereignty, human rights and a bright future for the children of Yemen!

*Follow Azza on Twitter: @Azza\_R14*



January 6, 2018 - Saada, Yemen following Saudi-led airstrikes

# U.S. & IMPERIALISTS ESCALATING THE WAR AGAINST SYRIA



## WHAT IS AT STAKE?

*By Alison Bodine*

At 4am on April 13, 2018 missiles rained down on Damascus, the capital city of Syria. That morning, the United States, United Kingdom and France launched 130 missiles against the people of Syria, the majority of which were aimed right at Damascus. They justified the bombing based on the unproven allegation that the Syrian government had carried out a chemical weapons attack against people in Douma, in eastern Ghouta. This direct bombing of Syria by the U.S. government and their allies is another brutal chapter in the seven-year imperialist war against the people of Syria.

Nearly one year ago, the U.S. government bombed Syria, using the same justification by alleging that the Syrian government had carried out a chemical weapons attack against the people of Syria. This use of allegations of chemical weapons attacks by the U.S., U.K and France is brutally reminiscent of the “weapons of mass destruction” justifications used by the U.S. government and their allies to bomb and invade Iraq in 2003, on the basis of “unverified” reports from “unknown sources on the ground.”

To this day, there is still no proof that the government of Syria carried out either of these chemical weapons attacks. In fact, the bombing of Syria, and the so-called targeting of the areas where chemical weapons were allegedly being manufactured, was carried out before the Organization for the Prevention of Chemical Weapons even began their investigation. What ever evidence might have existed of chemical weapons use, including that of chemical weapons use by U.S.-backed terrorists in Syria, was quickly bombed away.

Despite this, the government of Canada was quick to express their support for this escalation in the bloody war against the people of Syria. As Prime Minister Trudeau stated, “Canada supports the decision by the United States, the United Kingdom,

and France to take action to degrade the Assad regime’s ability to launch chemical weapons attacks against its own people.”

### What’s Iran Got to Do with It?

On May 10 Israel bombed western Syria, in an assault which has been reported in mainstream media to be the largest Israeli attack on Syria since 1973. This bombing has been portrayed by mainstream media as a retaliatory bombing by Israel in response to 20 missiles that were sent into Israel in the days previous, allegedly launched by Iranian forces in Syria.

However, this was not the case. Israel fired first, and Syrian government forces, not Iran, responded defensively. As the New York Times reported, this attack “came after what appeared to have been an Israeli missile strike against a village in the Syrian Golan Heights late on Wednesday.”

The most significant part of this attack was not who fired first, but the way that the U.S. government used this attack to justify further intervention in Syria. This was the first time that Israel accused Iran of attacking Israel from Syria. To the United States, the independent government of Iran is the biggest boogey man in the Middle East and North Africa. Therefore, by alleging that Iran was responsible for aggravating the Israeli bombing, the U.S. government had an excellent opportunity to scapegoat Iran. This, in turn, gives the U.S. the opportunity to gain the legitimacy that they need to further escalate the imperialist war on Syria.

It is also important to note that the Israeli bombing of Syria took place the day after U.S. President Trump declared that the United States would be leaving the 2015 nuclear deal with Iran. Blaming Iran for this bombing allows them to put further pressure on Iran, an independent country that the U.S. government needs to bring under their control to gain hegemony in the Middle East and North Africa.

### Humanitarian Crisis Made in the USA

Since the U.S.-led imperialist assault on Syria began in 2011, the main objective has been to overthrow the independent government of Bashar al Assad. To this end, the U.S. and their imperialist allies have trained, armed, and funded so-called ‘rebel’ groups that have brought death, destruction and chaos to Syria.

When it is politically convenient for them, the U.S. government will feign concern for the “children of Syria.” But, they will not cease their military interventions and their support for the terrorists, nor end their criminal sanctions.

For the last seven-years, these foreign-backed terrorists have attempted to tear the country apart. When the United Nations stopped reporting on the death toll in Syria in 2016, nearly 500,000 people had been killed. According to the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR), Syria today is a “colossal human tragedy.” 69% of people in Syria live in extreme poverty, with 5.6 million people requiring urgent humanitarian assistance. Over half of the people of Syria have been turned into refugees. 6.1 million Syrians are internally displaced, while 5.6 million Syrians have been forced to flee the country all together. 2.5 million children in Syria, referred to as a “lost generation”, are out of school.

### Why are Imperialists Escalating the War Against Syria?

Despite this devastating loss to humanity, the U.S. government and their allies are increasing their attacks on Syria. This is



because the imperialists are losing in Syria. After seven years of death and destruction they have not been able to force the overthrow of President Assad, who continues to liberate Syria from terrorist forces.

However, the imperialists are not giving up just yet, because they are not only losing in Syria, they are also losing in other countries where they have carried out wars and occupations. Iraq, Libya and Afghanistan continue to be countries in chaos and in crisis, outside of the complete control of the U.S. government.

Syria also continues to be important because, for them, the fall of the independent government of Syria means that Iran is next. Since the 1979 Iranian revolution, Iran has stood as an example for countries throughout the Middle East and North Africa that independence from the U.S. is possible. It is independence, not terrorism, that is threatening to U.S. interests in the region. Therefore, Saudi Arabia is their ally, while Iran is enemy #1.

### Hands Off Syria!

The last seven years have shown the world that U.S. government and their allies, including Canada, will stop at nothing to bring the independent country of Syria under their control. However, this has not stopped the people of Syria from fighting against imperialist intervention and foreign-backed terrorists. The governments of the U.S., U.K., France, Canada and Israel have Syrian blood on their hands.

The question is not whether or not to support the government of Bashar al Assad. That is not up to people in Canada, the U.S., or anyone outside of Syria to decide. Instead, the question is whether or not to support the people of Syria in their struggle to end the death and destruction that imperialists have imposed on them.

The people of Syria have the right to determine their own future. As people living in Canada, we have the responsibility to join them in their fight for self-determination against imperialist intervention.

Follow Alison on Twitter: @Alisoncolette

# VANCOUVER ACTIVISTS DEMAND “HANDS OFF SYRIA!” “STOP BOMBING YEMEN!”

By Janine Solanki

On Friday, April 13, 2018, the US, UK and France bombed the sovereign country of Syria with over 130 cruise missiles. This escalated attack comes after over seven years of a US fomented civil war in Syria, where the US government has funded and armed mercenaries in an attempt to overthrow the Syrian government, and the US and their imperialist allies have been directly attacking Syria.

The US government justified their airstrikes against Syria based on their totally unproven allegation that the Syrian government used chemical weapons against its own people. This dangerous tactic is nothing new for the US government. Like the supposed “Weapons of Mass Destruction” in Iraq, these baseless accusations followed by military onslaughts are just a pretext for imperialist interventions and cause nothing but misery and hardship for the people of Syria.

The US war on Syria is as part of the overall new era of war and occupation, in which the US and their imperialist allies have occupied or gone to war against Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria, Yemen and Palestine, or threatened and sanctioned other countries in the region including Iran. Vancouver, Canada’s antiwar coalition Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO) educates, organizes and mobilizes to end to all of these imperialist wars and occupations.

On **May 11**, MAWO organized its monthly antiwar rally and petition drive, focusing on the demands, “Don’t Attack Syria!” and “Stop Bombing Yemen!” Antiwar activists and peace-loving people talked with people passing by and at the information table. Many added their signatures on the petitions demanding that Canada end its sanctions and military



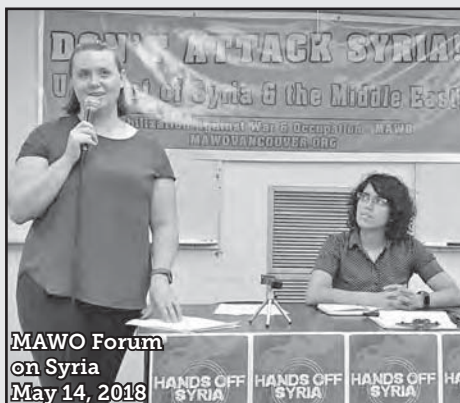
intervention in Syria.

For over three years, the Yemeni people have lived under ongoing airstrikes from Saudi Arabia and their allies, which has destroyed vital infrastructure, hospitals, homes and historic sites, and has indiscriminately killed and injured innocent Yemeni people. This has all been with the support of the US government, and of the government of Canada which counts Saudi Arabia as its second highest buyer of Canadian-made arms, following the US as the highest.

On **May 14**, MAWO organized a public forum and discussion titled “Hands Off Syria!” featuring Joe Lombardo, chair of the United National Antiwar Coalition (UNAC) who spoke from New York, United States via videoconference and Alison Bodine, the chair of MAWO.

The forum started with video clips bringing everyone up to date on the pressing issues facing the antiwar movement today. Joe Lombardo gave his perspective as an antiwar organizer in the US and stressed the importance of joining united actions in defense of Syria and against war. Alison Bodine gave an overview of the war on Syria within the new era of war and occupation. Also discussed at the forum was the massacre of Palestinian protesters which had occurred just earlier that day, where over 60 Palestinian demonstrators were brutally killed and over 2,700 injured by Zionist Israeli forces.

Mobilization Against War and Occupation is continuing to campaign against war and to demand self-determination for all oppressed nations, with public educational forums and antiwar rallies and petition campaigns as reported here, and by organizing and participating in conferences, demonstrations, cultural and community events, both locally and internationally. For more information about MAWO’s upcoming antiwar events and actions visit [www.mawovancouver.org](http://www.mawovancouver.org) or follow on Facebook or Twitter @MAWOVan



# THIS IS WHAT DEMOCRACY Revolutionary Journal

*Fire This Time Eyewitnesses*

*May 20, 2018 Elections in Venezuela*

By Alison Bodine, Thomas Davies  
& Mike Larson

*From May 18-22, 2018 Fire This Time was invited to participate in the International Observers Delegation to the Venezuela election. We spent four days in Venezuela learning about and experiencing the dynamics of a living and breathing socialist experiment and a historic election. Below is a journal of our initial reflections and observations that we had while in Venezuela. For more, including video reports, photos and interviews direct from Venezuela visit our website "Venezuela: This is What Democracy Looks Like" at <https://firethistime-venezuela2018.tumblr.com/>*

## Day 1 - May 18

The day we left from Venezuela the Financial Post newspaper had an article admitting that Maduro would win this Presidential election, but that "regime change" probably wasn't far away, and that was a good thing. The US customs official eyed us up and didn't seem to believe we were travelling there at this time. "Hope you come back."

All this reinforced why we needed to come here. So few people from Canada have visited Venezuela, and the media campaign is so persistent that a variety of outlandish stories are now more or less accepted. Otherwise critical minds seem to believe everything they

are told.

Now that we've been here for a day we can confirm that Caracas is not the burning hellhole of "socialist mismanagement" we're told about. Surrounded by steep hills on all sides, it buzzes with activity. The lights are on, hot water comes out of the taps, and there is an election about to happen.

The drive from the airport looked much the same as two months ago when Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice also participated in the delegation to the "TodosSomosVenezuela" conference. Except, this time we arrived in the afternoon - so the billboards and road stops painted in the colours of the Venezuelan flag were much more visible.

We passed brightly and beautifully coloured houses, and apartments, and flew right over a Mission Vivienda (the housing mission of the revolutionary government) complex when we landed - hundreds of homes that will be given to poor and working Venezuelans for free. Just imagine if we could have given the free houses and apartments to poor and low-income residents of the Downtown East Side of Vancouver or the growing number of homeless people in Surrey.

This will be Venezuela's 24th electoral action in 19 years. There are four presidential candidates and 16 political parties participating. We are here, with more than 300 observers from around the world, to take it all in. We have a lot to learn, and an important task of reporting truthfully about the reality of this society and its election. Very exciting!

## Day 2 - May 19

Early in the morning, driving through the steep streets of the city there were fruit, eggs, meat, coffee and car parts on sale in many little storefronts. There was election graffiti stenciled on a lot of public walls, and large public art dotting the different neighborhoods.



*Election Night, May 20, 2018  
Nicolas Maduro is Re-Elected President of Venezuela!*



*Election Billboards in Caracas, Venezuela  
Read "Together Everything is Possible"*



*Alison, Mike & Thomas at the "Urbanismo Hugo Chavez" Community. Vargas, Venezuela*

The city of Caracas is surrounded by the state of Miranda, "like a donut" as a Venezuela community organizer explained on the bus. Soon, we were in the Sucre Municipality in Miranda looking down at Caracas - in front of a large building with lined with colourful blue loading bays, surrounded by a high fence. This is one of the buildings of the National Electoral Council (CNE). In this building the electronic voting machines are tested and verified - over 34,000 of them.

Talking to the CNE staff you could really feel the pride Venezuelans have in their voting system, as they describe in great detail the various procedures and answer the many questions we had about voting in Venezuela. I have never heard someone explain hardware as enthusiastically as the technician that described to us the inner workings of the voting machines.

The same electronic voting machines are used





*Venezuela's Electronic Voting & Thumbprint Identity Verification Machines*



*Thomas is Filmed Explaining Touch-Screen Electronic Voting*

in every area of the country - including the most rural areas. Where there is no network connection, the results from the machines can be uploaded using a telephone signal; where there is no telephone signal, the results can be saved on an external device and uploaded from a networked area. On election day, 53% of the electronic reports throughout the country are audited against the paper copies of the vote, that are deposited by the voter in a ballot box. If requested by any of the participants in the election, there will be an 100% audit carried out.

It was incredible to be able to observe the verifications of the machines - and more so to imagine the millions of Venezuelans that will voting using these machines tomorrow. Here the vote will be



*Thomas with Legendary Argentinian Soccer Player Diego Maradona, Who is in Venezuela to Support the Campaign of President Nicolas Maduro*

universal, free, direct and secret, and to think that this is what the government of Canada refers to as an "illegitimate" election.

In the afternoon and evening, we had the opportunity to hear presentations that set the context for the vote happening tomorrow. The first was by a representative from the CNE in charge of voting centres in Caracas. She explained about the origins of the voting system in Venezuela today, starting from the passing of the 1999 Constitution of the Bolivarian revolution, which established the five independent branches of Venezuela's government - the executive, the legislative, the judicial, the citizens, and the electoral - the CNE.

As part of her presentation, she displayed photos of the right-wing violence that took place only 8 months ago, during the election of the National Constituent Assembly. During this election, counter-



*Alison & Mike Proudly Display Their Voting Receipt After a Practice Vote for Nicolas Maduro!*

revolutionary mercenaries threw grenades at the offices of the CNE, forced the closure of voting centres, and destroyed ballot boxes and over 200 voting machines. No one that I have spoken to since we arrived is expecting this level of violence from the U.S.-backed opposition - but Venezuela is prepared, and the rights of the Venezuelan people to vote without fear of right-wing violence will be protected tomorrow.

We learned more in depth about the incredible amount of controls, verifications and observations that are built into Venezuela's electoral system. This "dictatorship" has developed the most secure voting process in the world.

As we got ready to go to bed, television ads were constantly encouraging people to vote and explaining the simple process. A speech from Comandante Chavez, the former President of Venezuela and the leader of the Bolivarian revolution, who passed away in 2013, was also shown on the TeleSUR television station. In this speech Chavez called on the people of Venezuela, workers, students,



## *Message to the People of Canada*

*William Castillo - Vice Minister for International Communication of the Ministry of Popular Power for Foreign Relations*

I want to take this opportunity to greet the Canadian people, the worthy people of Canada, who are friends to the people of Venezuela. We believe that solidarity among peoples is a fundamental factor of union, kinship, and cooperation and we want and value the effort that many Canadians make to bring the truth of Venezuela to their country. We know that the people of Canada are a friendly people, respectful of international law and that they know that what is happening in Venezuela is a ratification of democracy and that Venezuela is neither a threat nor an enemy of democracy in the world. We want the people, the men and women of Canada, to know that Venezuela is only asking for respect of their sovereignty and their democracy.

Please receive our affection, our love and the assurance that in the people and government of Venezuela you have friends, partners in democracy, in freedom, and in justice for all. Thank you very much for being here in our homeland.

Quiero aprovechar esta oportunidad para saludar al pueblo canadiense, al digno pueblo de Canadá, que es un pueblo amigo de Venezuela. Creamos que la solidaridad entre los pueblos es un factor fundamental de unión, de hermandad, y de cooperación y queremos valoramos el esfuerzo que muchas canadienses hacen por llevar la verdad de Venezuela a su país. Sabemos que el pueblo de Canadá es un pueblo amigo, respetuoso de la ley internacional y que saben que lo que estás sucediendo en Venezuela es una ratificación de la democracia y que Venezuela no es una amenaza ni un país enemigo de la democracia en el mundo. Queremos que el pueblo, los hombres y mujeres de Canadá sepan que Venezuela lo único que piden es respecto de su soberanía, y respecto de su democracia.

Se reciben ustedes nuestro cariño, nuestro amor y la seguridad de que en el pueblo y el gobierno de Venezuela tienen amigos, tienen compañeros en la democracia, en la libertad, y en la justicia para todos y todas. Muchas gracias por estar aquí en nuestra patria.

women, intellectuals, soldiers, technicians, unions to unite in defense of the sovereignty and self-determination of Venezuela. These words are just as true today as they were then.

## ELECTION DAY! Day 3 - May 20

As we entered the Libertador municipality of Caracas, there was a sound of a trumpet, and soon after we pulled up to a voting centre. We had arrived at the Miguel Antonio Caro school - just moments after the first vote in the country had been cast, that of Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro.

There was a drone flying overhead, filming the lines of people forming

their assigned voting station. No one looked impatient, or worried, and most were chatting with their neighbour.

After observing this voting centre our bus headed to the well-known working-class neighborhood of 23 de Enero (23rd of January), this name was given to this neighborhood in 1958 to commemorate the overthrow of Venezuelan dictator Marcos Perez Jimenez. As soon as we stepped off the bus we were surrounded by many revolutionary murals. These walls had images of former President Hugo Chavez, Che Guevara and art in solidarity with the Palestinian people. Not to mention that they were playing Hasta Siempre, a song dedicated to Che Guevara, on loud speakers at the entrance to the community. Just walking through the neighbourhood alone gave you the feeling that this community was not just focused on their own projects but felt connected to the various struggles throughout the world.

In 23 de Enero there were several voting centres for the block of apartments. We were struck by how calm everything was. It was before 6:30am and already there were orderly lines at the voting centre. As we walked by the line, we were greeted by many friendly Venezuelans, they wanted us to see

their ID cards that guarantees them their right to vote and encouraged us to take photos of them.

As we entered the building used as the electoral centre, a community electoral official informed us that we were going to have the opportunity to see the voting process first hand. But first, she wanted to explain to us how important it was that they made sure each member of the community had a chance to vote. She also told us that members of the community would even go door to door throughout the day to encourage everyone to vote.

While in 23 de Enero, we



### Interview with Community Leader Dolores "Lola" Villegas

Good afternoon, my name is Dolores Villegas, they call me Lola. I am one of the leaders of Urbanismo Hugo Chávez, a product of the revolution. We are in the electoral center in the communal house where the 15 councils of popular power of this Urbanismo converge. Today we are in the middle of the election party, for the country, for Venezuela, for peace. You can see, as observers, that there is a party, everything is at peace, everything is quiet and in harmony and it is clear that we are looking for what we are always looking for, our peace and our sovereignty.

We will not allow any empire, not European, nor North American, to get their way in Venezuela. We decided to be free a long time ago together with an immortal leader named Hugo Chávez who still in our hearts. By our own decision we are free. Today we are demonstrating that we want to remain free.

At this electoral center there is always two shifts of people coming to vote, because of the effects of the sun and being on the coast. People come to the voting center from 6 in the morning to 2 in the afternoon. The next group comes after 5pm, as the sun has gone down and there is not so much heat. The center stays open until the last elector has voted. If the last elector arrives at 2 in the morning, then at 2 in the morning, this center is still open. Already, a large percentage of the 3,000 or so electors in this center have come to vote, more than 2,000. Almost 60% of people have voted and there are not many people missing. Why? Because people go out to vote, go out to participate and above all want freedom.

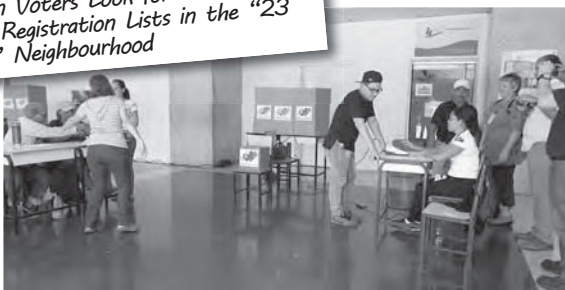
**FTT:** What is your message for the people of the world, direct from Venezuela?

**Lola:** My message is - unite. Unity, battle, victory and struggle. Those were the words that our previous president Hugo Chávez said.

Here we are sure that our president Nicolás Maduro has already been elected today through the democratic vote of the Venezuelan people. We are already sure that our President will back at it again, tomorrow, May 21, giving a hard time to this international interference, to North American and European interference.



Venezuelan Voters Look for Their Names on Voter Registration Lists in the "23 de Enero" Neighbourhood



Venezuelan Voters Making Their Way Around the "Voting Table" at a Voting Center Located in a Hosiptal

along the sidewalk. Others patiently waited in chairs decorated with a bright red fabric. Further into the voting centre,

people sat on long benches before they could enter

to see the voting process first hand. But first, she wanted to explain to us how important it



Voters Proudly Display Their Identification Cards



Venezuelan Voter Registers His Thumbprint to Begin the Voting Process



also visited a voting center in what turned out to be President Maduro's old high school. There were really big crowds out front, and a large shaded waiting area inside. There was right wing and public TV stations present.

Throughout the morning, we walked through several voting centers and the air of calm and efficiency was the same everywhere we went. Even some of the international delegates who had been skeptical of the voting process beforehand were talking about how impressed they were.

The next voting centre we visited was on an armed forces base, one which is used by both service members and their families. Before Comandante Chavez, members of the military were forbidden from voting. Now they wait their turn in line and can vote like everybody else.

Again, it was very peaceful in the voting areas. People seemed mostly shy to speak with us, but one woman stopped us to say that Venezuela isn't like what we were seeing on TV and she was here to defend her rights and her country.

The observation mission continued at a large hospital, where patients, doctors, nurses and the surrounding community could vote. It



## Venezuela Election Line Up - 6:30am - May 20, 2018!

For the afternoon we left the city of Caracas for the State of Vargas to the north, to the social housing complex Urbanismo Hugo Chavez. Visiting the voting centre at Urbanismo Hugo Chavez was an amazing experience. More than observing the election, while in the community we were able to see how Venezuelans are organising to solve everyday problems with a government equally committed to finding these solutions.

The voting centre we visited at the Urbanismo Hugo Chavez is set-up in a community building that lies in the centre of the apartment buildings. As with the previous voting centres, people were waiting patiently to vote, sitting under large white tents that have been set-up outside. Here there was also music playing, and a strong atmosphere of celebration and community.

Lola, a leader from the community council, and organizer for the election, explained that the social housing complex community started out as a response to a natural disaster that left many Venezuelan families homeless. The government's response was to start an ambitious project to not just rebuild the lost homes but to include the necessary infrastructure to provide everything needed to meet the social needs of those living in the community. This included a health clinic, market,

police station and recreational zones for youth to play sports.

Throughout election day, our team had visited five different voting locations and seen many more in our travels. We have no hesitation in saying we saw a process which was well organized, inclusive and comprehensive

in terms of checks and balances. It was just as interesting to drive through Caracas and see pockets of people and voting lineups taking place without fanfare all over the city.

Within three hours, we arrived at the headquarters of the National Electoral

Council. We entered a large tent where the press conference announcing the elections results would be taking place. There were dozens of television cameras set-up at the back of the room, including one for CNN.

Mass capitalist media such as CNN had already declared today's election to be "illegitimate," - so it makes you wonder why they even bother to show up for an announcement of the results.

The official announcement came around 10:30pm, when just over 92% of the votes had been reported. Maduro had won the election! Over 5.8 million people voted to continue the Bolivarian revolutionary process in Venezuela and maintain their independence and sovereignty and we have been witness to it! President Maduro, the United Socialist Party (PSUV) and supporters of the Bolivarian revolutionary process won another clear six year mandate to confront the challenges they face.

President Maduro had clearly won, as he had received over 4 million more votes than the next opposition candidate behind him Henri Falcon. However, it seemed that Falcon already knew what the results would be, because earlier in the day he had announced that he wouldn't be accepting the results of the election.

We could hear fireworks going off following the announcement of Maduro's victory, and we were able to see massive celebrations happening around the country on Venezuelan TV. We were sure the international press would show none of these.

What has been increasingly obvious this entire trip is that what the corporate mainstream media, including in Canada, is saying about the Venezuelan election is deliberately distorted. There are many challenges here, but nothing like the crisis we are told is here.

There is mass participation in the political process and continued support for the revolutionary government. Venezuela has a challenging road ahead in building its Socialist future, but this election was a very important step forward. We feel fortunate to have witnessed it for ourselves.



*President Nicolas Maduro Greets Supporters on Election Night*



*The Election Victory of President Nicolas Maduro is Declared by the CNE!*

seemed like a great idea to bring the voting directly to the hospital if patients can't leave. Here, we had opportunity to interview Kager Brazon, a 19-year-old voting for his first time. He was impressed by how calm the day had been, and it was clear that he felt relaxed and well-prepared for the entire process.



*Alison Speaks Representing International Election Observers at the "Urbanismo Hugo Chavez", Vargas, Venezuela*

Thank you very much to all Venezuelans and all of you here. We are in solidarity with your struggles against imperialism, against the government of Canada and the government of the United States, and the governments of Europe that are constantly attacking your process of democracy, your rights to sovereignty and self-determination. We are here from the belly of the beast to say that the government of Canada and the Lima Group do not have the right to say anything about the process of democracy here in Venezuela (applause).

We can see with our own eyes that this electoral process is so strong, it is free, it is fair and it is transparent. This electoral process is an example for the world about how it is possible to have a vote with millions of people in an atmosphere of peace and tranquility.

We are here to convey all your stories, all of your actions today to the media in Canada and the United States. We are here in solidarity with your struggles against the criminal sanctions of Canada, the United States and the European Union. And also, to say that we, as oppressed people of Canada, workers, women, youth, we are with you every day and we will always be here when there are attacks from United States and Canada and imperialism. We are together in this struggle, in this historical moment.

The people united will never be defeated!

(all together) The united people will never be defeated! The people united will never be defeated!

(applause)

## Day 4 - May 21

Monday morning in Caracas was business as usual with Venezuelans returning to daily life after weeks of preparation, campaigning, voting and celebrating the re-election of President Nicolas Maduro. The traffic sounds were the loudest they have been, and commuters were streaming into tall buildings and sipping coffee at sidewalk stalls.

For a place that is supposed to not have anything on the store shelves... there sure was a lot of things on the store shelves. There's no denying there are challenges here, but people are living their lives and what's happening is nothing even remotely resembling the supposed widespread starvation and desperation we are told there is.

The driving skills of our bus drivers were on full display as we weaved our way through traffic up to the Cuartel de las Montañas (the mountain barracks). Today, these barracks have become the final resting place of Comandante Hugo Chavez and home to El Museo Histórico Militar de Caracas (The Historical Military Museum of Caracas).

The first thing we saw at the front gates of the base was a large pedestal with a big flame, this was the eternal flame that was lit to commemorate Chavez's legacy after he passed away. Behind the flame was a large 4F which has a huge significance in Venezuelan history. 4F means 4th of February when the Revolutionary Bolivarian Movement-200 led by Hugo Chavez in 1992 had attempted take power to dispose of a corrupt government. Although it failed, Chavez took responsibly and this made him a well-known figure in Venezuela and later helped him launch his victorious presidential campaign.

Once inside the Barracks complex, you had to walk through a corridor of flag polls with a flag from each country in Latin America, and at the end we were greeted by our tour



*Alison & Mike in Front of the Eternal Flame for Comandante Hugo Chavez at the "Cuartel de las Montañas" Military Barracks*

guide. He was a Venezuelan militia member who enthusiastically explained the history of the Barracks.

We had an opportunity to pay respects to Chavez and hear the voices of the changing of the guard ring off the tall walls, Dignidad! Unidad! Lucha! (Dignity! Unity! Struggle!) It was very moving, and we couldn't help but feel his presence as we made our way around the tomb in the center of the room.

We spent the afternoon at the Ministry of Popular Power for Foreign Relations (MPPRE), participating in an elections assessment meeting with William Castillo, the Vice Minister of International Communication with the MPPRE, Edwin Diaz, Secretary of the Vice Presidency of International Relations of the United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV), Roy Dana, Member of the International Relations Commission of the PSUV, and Jacobo Torres, a member of the National Constituent Assembly. Their message to the international observers was clear: there is a diplomatic, media and economic war being waged against Venezuela - a war that can be countered with our eyewitness accounts of the May 20th elections and the reality in Venezuela today.

At the meeting, we were also able to sign on to an international declaration issued by those who had observed the election, defending the process as free, fair and legitimate. This was especially important for us as we read the Canadian government's absolutely false and inflammatory statement condemning the Venezuelan elections.

As eyewitnesses to the elections, we can say with certainty that the victory of Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro was anything but "illegitimate." President Maduro's re-election was transparent, free, and fair. In fact, the Bolivarian revolutionary process has a proven record of open and transparent elections, even receiving recognition from former US President Carter for having an election process that is "the best in the world."

For us, there is no question that the governments of the United States, Canada, the European Union and the mass media that serves as their mouthpiece are lying about not only the May 20th election, but also about the reality of Venezuelan society today. Caracas is a vibrant city, there are hardships, but the people of Venezuela are committed to building a country that is independent, sovereign and free from the right-wing counter-revolutionary violence. They are working hard to defend their revolution, and now we must return home and continue to do our part to end the sanctions, threats and all imperialist intervention in Venezuela.

*Follow Alison on Twitter: @Alisoncolette*

*Follow Thomas on Twitter: @thomasdavies59*

*Follow Mike on Twitter: @Mikael\_L7*



# U.S./Canada/E.U. Hands Off Venezuela!



*By Alison Bodine*

Nicolas Maduro was re-elected as President of Venezuela on May 20, 2018, with an outstanding majority - 68% of the ballots cast. President Maduro was far ahead of any other candidate, with Henri Falcon receiving just 21% of the vote, and the other two candidates following far behind. This election is a great victory and step-forward for the people of Venezuela and the Bolivarian revolutionary process.

The governments of the U.S., Canada and the European Union (E.U.) were quick to respond to the re-election of President Maduro. As they had already declared the election to be "illegitimate" and "antidemocratic" - their statements condemning the people of Venezuela for their democratic decision were of no surprise. Also, of no surprise were the threats to further sanctions and continued meddling in the internal affairs of Venezuela that these same statements contained.

"The United States condemns the fraudulent election that took place in Venezuela on May 20... Until the Maduro regime restores a democratic path in Venezuela through free, fair, and transparent elections, the government faces isolation from the international community." - U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo

"Yesterday's presidential elections in Venezuela are illegitimate and anti-democratic...the Maduro regime has shown itself unwilling to make any serious attempt to ensure the elections meet international

democratic standards of freedom and fairness." - Chrystia Freeland, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Canada

"...the EU calls for the holding of fresh presidential elections in accordance with internationally recognized democratic standards and the Venezuelan constitutional order...the EU will act swiftly, according to established procedures, with the aim of imposing additional targeted and reversible restrictive measures." - European Council resolution, May 28, 2018

In one fell swoop, the U.S. government and their allies have unanimously refused to recognize the legitimacy of the election, called for further sanctions and "measures" against Venezuela, and offered aid to the people of Venezuela (who, by the way, are suffering due to a brutal U.S.-led sanctions regime).

The day after such a clear electoral victory for President Maduro, the headline should have been, "Venezuela Re-Elects President Maduro." However, this was not the case at all. Instead, major media was right in lock-step with the U.S. government and their allies, calling into question the validity of the May 20 election in a well-coordinated chorus of headlines. As reported by Fairness & Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR), "Amid" was the buzzword used across the board:

"Venezuela's Maduro Re-elected **Amid** Outcry Over Vote" (Reuters, 5/20/18)

"Venezuela Election Won by Maduro **Amid** Widespread Disillusionment" (New York Times, 5/20/18)

"Venezuela Election: Maduro Wins Second Term **Amid** Claims of Vote Rigging" (BBC (5/21/18))

"Venezuela's Maduro Wins Re-election **Amid** Opposition Boycott" (Wall Street Journal, 5/21/18)

"Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro Wins Re-election **Amid** Charges of Irregularities" (Chicago Tribune, 5/20/18)

Perhaps, as with the statements from the U.S. governments and their allies, this unanimity is possible because their headlines are also pre-written?

Among others, there is one major "Amid" that all the mainstream media headlines are missing - Over 6 million Venezuelans elect President Nicolas Maduro to a second term **Amid** a brutal U.S.-led sanctions regime and threats from the U.S. and their allies to increase sanctions and intervention in Venezuela if Maduro is re-elected.

Given the escalating campaign of sanctions and intervention, the people of Venezuela had every reason to believe that the U.S., Canada and the E.U. would make good on their pre-election threats. If President Maduro won the election, Venezuelans knew that more imperialist attacks and hardship would be coming.

But, of course, mainstream media isn't presenting any of that perspective at all, as Human Rights lawyer, and international observer to the May 20 election Daniel Kovalik wrote in the article, "The Real Venezuela Is Not What You Think",

“Grateful for a government on their side and flouting U.S. extortion, the poor came out to vote in large numbers for Mr. Maduro. These are the same poor, by the way, who came down from the mountains in 2002 to demand the return of Hugo Chavez to power after he was overthrown in a U.S.-backed coup and kidnapped.

But you never hear the voices of these poor people in the U.S. press. You never hear their side of the story, how they have benefitted from the Bolivarian Revolution and how desperately they do not want to go back to how things were before.”

### More Elections = More Sanctions & Attacks

The May 20 Presidential election in Venezuela was the fourth election to take place in Venezuela since the election of the National Constituent Assembly (ANC) in July 2017. In each of these elections, the ANC, elections for state governors, and elections for mayors, revolutionary forces have triumphed overwhelmingly. In due turn, with each election, has also come increasing sanctions from the U.S., Canada and the European Union.

On May 21, U.S. President Trump immediately issued an Executive Order further preventing Venezuela from having normal relations with the world market, including severely restricting their ability to pay off and re-structure debts, sell assets, or to receive any profits or dividends from the U.S.-based Citgo oil company that is owned by the government of Venezuela. This has also led to a decrease in imports to Venezuela, including shipments of food and medicines which are withheld or trapped offshore due to the financial restrictions of the sanctions.

At every opportunity, the U.S. government is working to strangle the Venezuelan economy and bring the people of Venezuela to their knees – a vital part of their campaign to overthrow the government of Venezuela and turn back the gains of the Bolivarian revolutionary process. As the economist Mark Weisbrot stated, “By starving the economy of foreign exchange, this action will harm the private sector, most Venezuelans, the poor and the vulnerable.” (The Hill, August 2017)

The government of Canada also moved quickly to implement diplomatic and financial measures against Venezuela. As a leader in the so-called Lima Group, a coalition of 14 right-wing Latin American governments and Canada, the government of Canada immediately announced that it

would “downgrade the level of their diplomatic relations with Venezuela.” Although, downgrading relations further would be difficult for Canada, because, in December, Venezuela stripped Canada’s Charge d’Affaires in Caracas of their credentials for meddling in their internal affairs.

The Foreign Minister of Canada, Chrystia Freeland also announced that the government of Canada was adding 14 more Venezuelans to their list of sanctions. This included the First Lady of Venezuela, who is also an elected representative in the National Constituent Assembly, Cilia Flores. This means that Canada now sanctions 54 Venezuelan individuals.

These illegal sanctions are dangerous because they demonstrate the extreme hostility of the government of Canada to the sovereign government of Venezuela and violate the human rights of those that they target, but they are also in a way ridiculous.

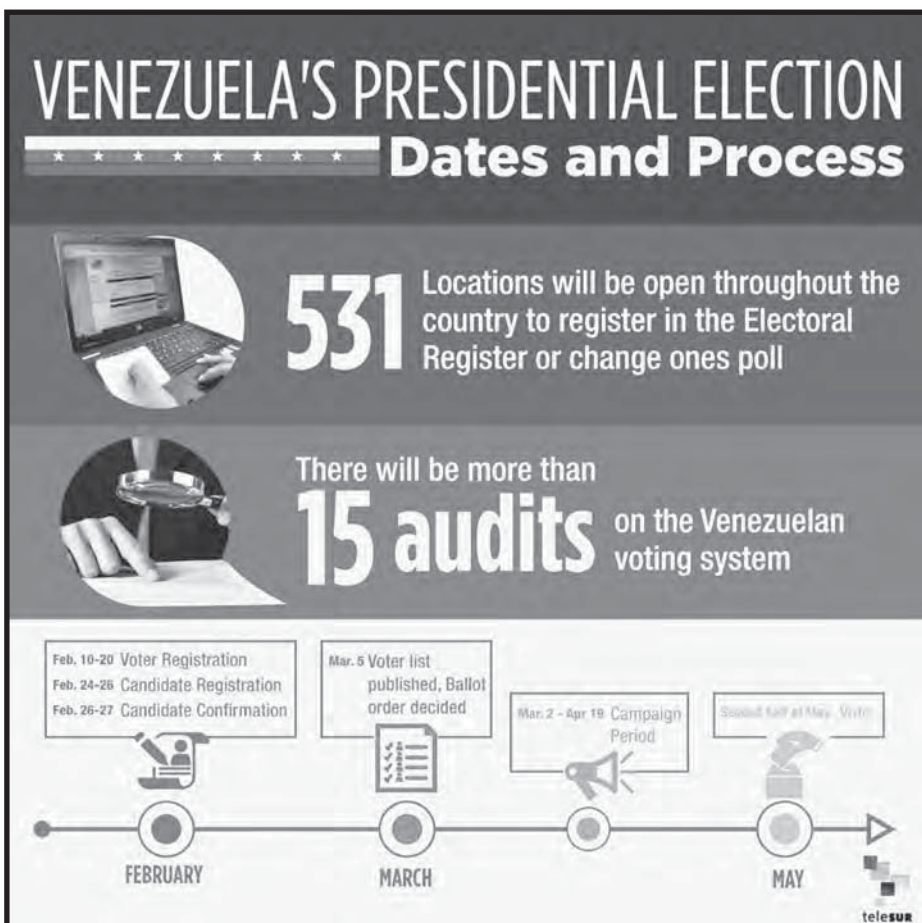


President Nicolas Maduro Greets Supporters after May 20, 2018 Presidential Election

Take, for example, one of the people to appear on the newest list Carolyn Helena Pérez González, a revolutionary, Afro-Venezuelan who is the Assistant Secretary of the National Constituent Assembly. The government of Canada has sanctioned her by closing her accounts in Canada and taking away her possibility for getting a visa to Canada, but she doesn’t have any Canadian accounts and has no need or desire for a visa to Canada.

### Democracy for Who?

The governments of the U.S., Canada and the





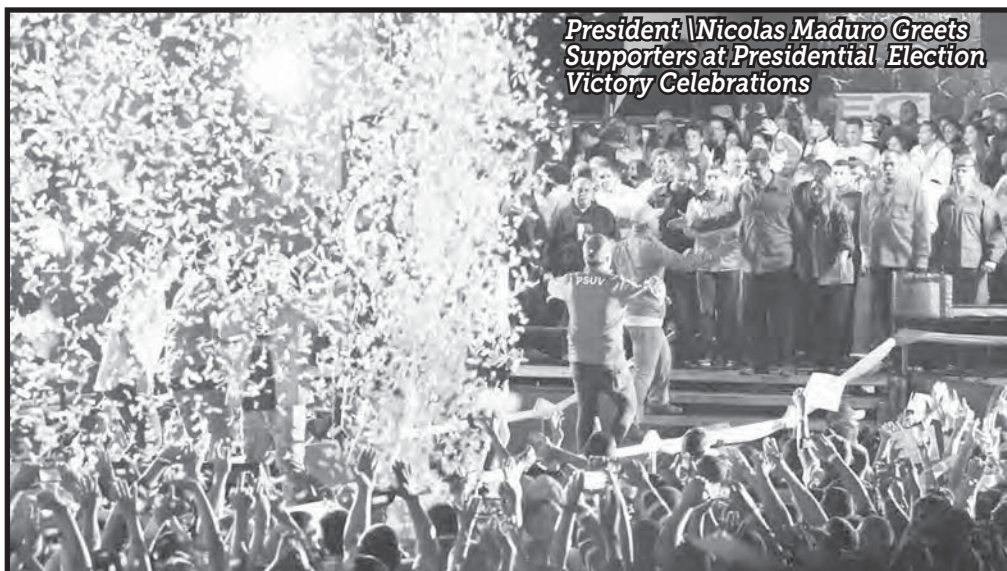
European Union have weaponized the word “democracy,” thrown it around and changed it’s meaning to achieve their imperialist objectives. They have done the same with principles such as “freedom” and “fairness.”

The only form of “democracy” that these governments support is one in which they come out on the side of the victors. In Venezuela, this means that the U.S. government and their allies had nothing bad to say about the 2015 elections in Venezuela, where-in a right-wing majority was voted into the National Assembly. Their allies, the violent, counter-revolutionary opposition in Venezuela had won, therefore the election was democratic.

This is the same reason that imperialist governments and the mainstream media have been silent regarding the election at the end of May in Colombia. Their ally, right-wing Ivan Duque, is set to win in the run-off election, so it doesn’t matter to them that “democratic elections” in Colombia mean widespread accounts of voter-fraud, or that one social leader murdered in Colombia every three days (Atlantic Magazine).

The U.S. and Canada have also been silent about the impossibility of a “free and fair” election in Mexico, where Reuters reported that 82 candidates and elected officials have been murdered since September.

There are numerous examples of this deliberate bias, where the response of the U.S. government and their allies has ranged from a refusal to recognize the democratically elected government to bloody military intervention to overthrow them: Hamas, Palestine (2006); Islamic Salvation Front, Algeria (1991); Salvador Allende,



**President Nicolas Maduro Greets Supporters at Presidential Election Victory Celebrations**

Chile (1970); Mohammad Mossadegh, Iran (1951), and many more.

It is audacious for the government of Canada to even open their mouths to claim that the May 20 election in Venezuela was “anti-democratic.” Canada prevented the over 6,000 Venezuelans living in Canada from voting in the election at all.

The U.S. government and their allies can’t even get their heads straight about whether elections in Venezuela are a good thing for the people of Venezuela that they claim to care so much about. Again, following the same logic as their definition of “democracy,” elections are only acceptable if their counter-revolutionary allies are sure to win.

Less than a year ago Western government statements and their mass media mouthpiece were on a continuous loop of demanding that the government of Venezuela call immediate Presidential elections. The website [Investigation.net](http://Investigation.net) compiled demands from releases of the U.S. State Department, a few of them were:

“President Maduro [...] should hold elections as soon as possible.” (March 29)

“We [...] echo the Venezuelan people’s calls for prompt elections” (April 10)

“We call again upon the Government of Venezuela to [...] hold prompt elections” (April 18)

“It’s the Venezuelan people who should decide Venezuela’s future, which is why we once again call on the Venezuelan authorities

to promptly hold free, fair, and transparent elections.” (May 2)

Now that Venezuela has held Presidential elections, the U.S. government seems to have forgotten all about their previous demands.

### What is the End Game?

The U.S. government and their allies

*continued on page 31*



**In the last 7 Years, the Government of the Bolivarian Revolution has built more than 2 million homes and given them to poor and working Venezuelans for free as part of the “Gran Misión Vivienda Venezuela”**

## Battle of Ideas Press

### Revolution & Counter Revolution in Venezuela



#### By Alison Bodine

Writer and researcher on Venezuela. She is a member of the Fire This Time Newspaper Editorial Board and is the coordinator of the Fire This Time Venezuela Solidarity Campaign. Alison Bodine is an electrical designer based in Vancouver, Canada.

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# Quotes from **CHE** that all **REVOLUTIONARIES** Should Know...

"Furthermore, [Capitalism] is a contest among wolves. One can win only at the cost of the failure of others."

"We revolutionaries often lack the knowledge and intellectual audacity needed to meet the task of developing the new man and woman with methods different from the conventional ones; conventional methods suffer from the influences of the society that created them."

"At the risk of seeming ridiculous, let me say that the true revolutionary is guided by great feelings of love. It is impossible to think of a genuine revolutionary lacking this quality."





# Cuba and Venezuela: *A Single Heart*

*By Yalma Puig Meneses*

*Translation by: Tamara Hansen*

*An exchange between Delcy Rodríguez Gómez, President of the National Constituent Assembly of Venezuela and the Cuban press, addressing different topics of interest to both countries.*

CARACAS, Venezuela - Delcy Rodríguez Gómez is combative and intelligent. A lawyer by profession, she has defended the Bolivarian Revolution and the right to self-determination of her people with vehemence and courage in diverse situations.

In the diplomatic arena, she gained wide recognition in her position as Venezuela's Foreign Minister between 2014 and 2017; becoming one of the most recognizable figures within the government, both nationally and internationally.

Since August 4, 2017, by popular decision, she now serves as President of the National Constituent Assembly, which was formed – ending of a period of intense violence in Venezuela – “with the consolidation of peace and the constituent electoral process,” which has now marked the last year in the life of this sister nation.

In a dialogue with the Cuban press, a few days after the extraordinary victory at the polls by the Bolivarian Revolution on May 20, Delcy Rodríguez Gómez assures us that “the Constituent Assembly brought political rebalancing to Venezuela [...] peace came again.” This was consolidated with the constituent electoral process and the re-election of President Nicolás Maduro Moros by a majority vote.

The people of Venezuela granted Maduro “a clear mandate, [...] anti-imperialist, because they voted for self-determination.”

“The people had a lot of wisdom with that 68% that they gave to President Nicolás Maduro”; this mandate will be “anti-neoliberal, for Bolivarian socialism, and for social security programs [...]. We do not want civil war in Venezuela, we do not want destabilization, political stability is needed here to move forward economic reforms” and will protect the country from economic aggression.

Inquiring about the complex context in which her country lives – subjected to intense

pressure by the Government of the United States and its allies – Rodríguez Gómez could not avoid talking about the Cuban people. She recalled their numerous examples of dignity in the face of adversity, which she considers a historical reference that Venezuela has taken as a guide, as a beacon.

That is why our call, she said, is to readjust international relations between governments of the region that are not looking to the unity of the great Homeland, but “to satisfy imperial mandates from the north [...] and have turned their backs on their peoples”.

Cuba is a recurring theme; it is inevitable. Beyond mere cooperation, the Cuban and Venezuelan peoples are united by ties of



**President of Cuba, Miguel Díaz-Canel & Delcy Rodríguez, President of Venezuela's National Constituent Assembly**

brotherhood and sisterhood. A connection born of the determination and love that Fidel and Chávez gave to this brotherhood, giving “soul to our social programs”.

With frank certainty, the President of the National Constituent Assembly is convinced that with the re-election of President Nicolás Maduro Moros and the government of continuity that exists in Cuba, led by President Miguel Díaz-Canel Bermúdez, both nations will not only maintain their bilateral relations, “but we will deepen them further”.

“This is also part of the defense of the ‘Patria Grande’ that Martí and Bolívar dreamed of; which is the ideological foundation of our kinship [...] so Cuba and Venezuela will continue to build one heart”.

“Because every time one of the Cuban cooperators works here in a mission, we are saying that this is the true love between peoples. And that is what should reign if we want a more just humanity, they should



**President of Venezuela, Nicolás Maduro & President of Cuba, Miguel Díaz-Canel**

see themselves in the mirror of the sister relationship that exists between Cuba and Venezuela,” she said.

She continues revealing to the cameras her deep emotions for Cuba and its people; evoking Fidel, who is stamped forever “in the heart of humanity [...] we continue with his legacy, with his example, inspired by his actions”; and thanking Army General Raúl Castro Ruz, whose presidency meant so much for the political process of transformation in the region.

“The cooperation of the Cuban people fills us with pride,” she says and smiles. “For us they are heroes and heroines ... there is the expression that ‘another human being is possible’, a human being of solidarity, who accompanies the people in their hardships, listening to their pain, but also sharing their joys.”

Venezuela has continuously overcome obstacles in these almost twenty years of the Bolivarian Revolution. Economic war; siege from the outside and from the internal opposition forces; all kinds of unconventional warfare; fierce media campaigns and much more. All have endowed the Venezuelan people, whose history is steeped in resistance, with their main strength – in the words of President Maduro – the popular conscience.

That is why, adds Rodríguez Gómez, “a conscious people is indestructible, it is invincible, and the Venezuelan people are a conscious people”, and that “since the arrival of Comandante Hugo Chávez, they became political power.”

Immense are the challenges that Venezuela continues to face. The President of the National Constituent Assembly recognizes this, but is convinced that popular conscience, or collective conscience, is what has allowed them to confront and defeat the aggressions against the Bolivarian Revolution. Against which national pride has been raised as a protective shield.

*From: [www.juventudrebelde.cu](http://www.juventudrebelde.cu)*

# Cuba y Venezuela, *Un Solo Corazón*

**\* EN ESPAÑOL \***

*Por Yalma Puig Meneses*

*En intercambio con la prensa cubana, Delcy Rodríguez Gómez, presidenta de la Asamblea Nacional Constituyente de Venezuela, abordó diferentes temas de interés para nuestros países*

CARACAS, Venezuela. — Delcy Rodríguez Gómez tiene un verbo combativo, inteligente. Abogada de profesión, ha defendido con vehemencia y coraje a la Revolución Bolivariana y el derecho a la autodeterminación de su pueblo en los más disímiles escenarios.

Sobre el terreno diplomático ganó un amplio reconocimiento desde su posición como Canciller venezolana —entre los años 2014 y 2017—, convirtiéndose en una de las figuras más sobresalientes dentro del gobierno, o, tanto a nivel nacional como internacional.

Y desde el 4 de agosto de 2017, por decisión popular, se desempeña como Presidenta de la Asamblea Nacional Constituyente, momento en el cual culminó un periodo de intensa violencia en Venezuela «con la consolidación de la paz y el proceso electoral constituyente» que ese año cobró vida en la hermana nación.

En diálogo con la prensa cubana, a pocos días de la extraordinaria victoria alcanzada en las urnas por la Revolución Bolivariana, el pasado 20 de mayo, Delcy Rodríguez Gómez asegura que «la Asamblea Constituyente trajo el reequilibrio político a Venezuela [...] llegó la paz nuevamente» y se consolidó junto al proceso electoral constituyente que cerró su ciclo con la reelección del presidente Nicolás Maduro Moros por votación mayoritaria.

El pueblo de Venezuela le otorgó a Maduro «un mandato claro, [...] antiimperialista, porque votó por la autodeterminación».

«Mucha sabiduría tuvo el pueblo con ese 68% que le dio al presidente Nicolás Maduro»; es un mandato «anti neoliberal, por el socialismo bolivariano y el sistema de protección social [...]». No queremos guerra civil en Venezuela, no queremos desestabilización, aquí está la estabilidad política para las reformas económicas que se necesitan y para proteger al país de la agresión económica.

Inquirida sobre el complejo escenario en que vive su país, sometido a fuertes presiones por el Gobierno de los Estados Unidos y sus aliados, Rodríguez Gómez no pudo evitar



**Presidente de Venezuela, Nicolás Maduro y Presidente de Cuba, Miguel Díaz-Canel**

hablar del pueblo cubano. Rememoró sus numerosos ejemplos de dignidad en la peor de las adversidades, considerados por ella como una referencia histórica que han tomado como una guía, como un faro.

«Por eso nuestro llamado» —aseguró—, «=es a que se reajusten las relaciones internacionales de los gobiernos de la región que no están mirando a la unión de la Patria grande, sino «a satisfacer mandatos imperiales desde el norte [...] y le han dado la espalda a sus pueblos».

Cuba se vuelve tema recurrente; resulta inevitable. Lazos de hermandad, más allá de la cooperación, son los que unen a los pueblos cubano y venezolano. Nexos nacidos del empuje y el amor que Fidel y Chávez dieron a esta hermandad, y dotaron de «alma a nuestros programas sociales».

Entonces, con franca certeza, la Presidenta de la Asamblea Nacional Constituyente se muestra convencida de que con la reelección del mandatario Nicolás Maduro Moros y el gobierno de continuidad que existe en Cuba, encabezado por el presidente Miguel Díaz-Canel Bermúdez, ambas naciones no solo mantendrán sus relaciones bilaterales, «sino que las vamos a profundizar aún más».

«Ello forma parte también de la defensa de la Patria Grande que soñaron Martí y Bolívar; ahí están los cimientos ideológicos de nuestra fraternidad [...] así que Cuba y Venezuela seguirán armando un solo corazón».

«Porque cada vez que aquí funciona una de las misiones con cooperantes cubanos, nosotros estamos diciendo que es ese el verdadero amor entre los pueblos. Y eso es lo que debería reinar si queremos una humanidad más justa, deberían verse en el espejo de la relación hermana que existe entre Cuba y Venezuela», valoró.



**Presidente de Cuba, Miguel Díaz-Canel y Delcy Rodríguez, Presidenta de la Asamblea Nacional Constituyente**

Y así continúa revelando ante las cámaras sus profundas emociones por Cuba y su pueblo; evoca a Fidel, estampado para siempre «en el corazón de la humanidad entera [...] ahí vamos con su legado, con su ejemplo, inspirados en su accionar»; y agradece al General de Ejército Raúl Castro Ruz, cuya presidencia tanto significó para el proceso político de transformación en la región.

«La cooperación del pueblo cubano nos llena de orgullo» —nos dice y sonríe—. «Para nosotros son héroes y heroínas [...] ahí está la expresión de que otro ser humano es posible, un ser humano solidario, acompañando al pueblo en sus penurias, escuchando su dolor, pero que también comparte sus alegrías.»

Uno tras otro Venezuela ha ido sorteando escollos en estos casi veinte años de Revolución Bolivariana. Guerra económica; asedio desde el exterior y también desde las fuerzas opositoras internas; todo tipo de guerra no convencional; feroces campañas mediáticas y mucho más, han dotado de una histórica resistencia al pueblo venezolano, cuya principal fortaleza —al decir del presidente Maduro— está en la conciencia popular.

Es por eso —añade Rodríguez Gómez— que «un pueblo consciente es indestructible, es invencible, y el pueblo venezolano es un pueblo consciente», que «desde la llegada del Comandante Hugo Chávez, se hizo poder político».

Inmensos son los desafíos que continúa teniendo por delante Venezuela, la Presidenta de la Asamblea Nacional Constituyente lo reconoce, convencida de que esa conciencia popular, esa conciencia colectiva, es lo que ha permitido enfrentar y derrotar las más disímiles agresiones a la Revolución Bolivariana, ante las cuales se ha levantado como escudo protector la identidad nacional.

*Desde: [www.juventudrebelde.cu](http://www.juventudrebelde.cu)*



# Fire This Time Venezuela Solidarity Campaign demands: Sovereignty & Self-Determination for Venezuela!

By Janine Solanki

On May 4, 2018, Venezuela supporters came together for a monthly protest in defense of Venezuela and their Bolivarian Revolution, organized by the Fire This Time Venezuela Solidarity Campaign. This action came at a particularly critical time, just three weeks before the May 20 Presidential elections in Venezuela. Since the Bolivarian Revolution started with

Canada were already condemning the elections as illegitimate and making it clear that they would not respect Venezuela's sovereignty, and would not accept the results of the election if Venezuela's President Nicolas Maduro was reelected.

The May 4 monthly action started out with a picket action in front of the US Consulate in downtown Vancouver. With a large Venezuelan flag and signs reading "USA: Hands Off Venezuela!" and "No Regime Change in Venezuela!" protesters gathered to hear local speakers in between rounds of energetic picketing and chanting. After a group photo with picket signs held up defiantly under the sign of the US Consulate, the protesters continued to the second part of the action, which was at the busy downtown plaza in front of the Vancouver Art Gallery. The Venezuela Solidarity Campaign set up an information table and passers-by were attracted by the large Venezuelan flag and picket signs to come by and talk to organizers. Activists also approached people walking by to sign the petition demanding that the government of Canada end their sanctions and threats against Venezuela.



the election of former President Hugo Chavez in 1999, the US government has been attempting to reverse the gains that the Bolivarian revolutionary process has made for millions of poor, working and oppressed people in Venezuela. This campaign also includes increasingly brutal sanctions, threats of military intervention and support and funding for Venezuela's violent opposition.

Despite months of the governments of the US and Canada calling for the Venezuelan government to hold elections, as soon as elections were called in Venezuela the US and Canada changed their tune. Before the elections had taken place the governments of the US and

on May 17, another protest was held in defense of Venezuela, organized by the Hugo Chávez People's Defense Front Southwest Canada Chapter. With a large banner reading "US/Canada Hands Off Venezuela!" the Fire This Time Venezuela Solidarity Campaign joined to support and participate in this action, held just a few days before the Venezuelan elections.

Here in Vancouver, actions are continuing to defend Venezuela's right to self-determination and to support the Bolivarian Revolution. Find out about upcoming events at [www.firethistime.net](http://www.firethistime.net) or follow on Facebook and Twitter

@FTT\_np

## OUR HERITAGE



### Bernadette Devlin McAliskey

*Irish independence fighter and civil rights leader. In 1969, at 21, she was the youngest ever elected Member of Parliament, and sat as an independent socialist. She survived being shot 14 times in a British government-linked assassination attempt in 1981*

"The issue of repeal of the Eighth Amendment\* is actually not even an issue about abortion. It is fundamentally in this case about abortion. But it is at its core, in the 21st Century, a demand that the last usurpation of authority of the individual human being, of human beings, be ended. That is the usurpation of a woman's right to control her own body. To exercise first and last authority over that individual body. All day. Every day that she is alive. Not simply when she is a pregnant woman.

Let us be clear that the demand of the end of usurpation. The demand for our right to control our bodies. To make our own reproductive system is not a favour we are asking for certain circumstances. It is a fundamental defense of democracy for every person..."

**-March for Choice, September 30 2017.**

*\*The Eighth Amendment criminalized abortion in Ireland under all circumstances, except where the life of a pregnant woman was at risk. On May 25, 2018, after decades-long campaign led by Irish women, a referendum was passed overwhelmingly to delete the constitutional ban on abortion.*



# Fire This Time!

## CANADA

**STOP INTERFERING IN VENEZUELAN ELECTIONS!  
U.S./CANADA: HANDS OFF VENEZUELA!**

### Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice Statement

May 17, 2018

Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice condemns in the strongest possible terms the provocative and anti-democratic move by the Canadian government to attempt to block the establishment of polling stations at Venezuelan diplomatic missions in Canada. This is a complete violation of Venezuela's sovereignty as well as long established international agreements.

The Canadian government is attempting to deny the 6,000 registered Venezuelan voters currently living in Canada the ability to participate in the Venezuelan Presidential election this Sunday May 20. This is the latest escalation in the ongoing attacks by the Canadian government against the democratically elected government of current Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro.

This campaign began with threats, moved to economic sanctions, and also continued with an irrational pre-emptive declaration that the upcoming Venezuelan presidential elections are not free and fair even before anyone has cast a vote!

This Sunday will be Venezuela's 24th electoral event in 20 years. Even former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, whose institute has observed many Venezuelan elections, admitted that, "As a matter of fact, of the 92 elections that we've monitored, I would say that the election process in Venezuela is the best in the world."

We completely support Venezuelan Foreign Minister Jorge Arreaza's announcement that Venezuela's diplomatic missions in Canada will continue to establish polling stations regardless of continued Canadian government attacks.

As the Canadian government and mainstream media continue to distort and defame the Venezuelan government and electoral process, Fire This Time is sending three of its own reporters to the country to witness and report firsthand the Presidential elections. We continue to call for an end to all threats and sanctions against the sovereign country of Venezuela, and demand the Canadian government immediately rescind its decision to block the polling stations in Venezuelan diplomatic missions in Canada.

**U.S./Canada:  
Hands Off Venezuela!**

## CANADÁ

**DEJA DE INTERFERIR EN LAS ELECCIONES VENEZOLANAS!  
U.S./CANADÁ: ¡MANOS FUERA DE VENEZUELA!**

### Declaración de Fire This Time Movimiento para la justicia social

17 de mayo de 2018

Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice condena en los términos más enérgicos posibles la acción provocadora y antidemocrática del gobierno canadiense para intentar bloquear el establecimiento de colegios electorales en las misiones diplomáticas venezolanas en Canadá. Esta es una completa violación de la soberanía de Venezuela, así como de los acuerdos internacionales establecidos desde hace mucho tiempo.

El gobierno canadiense está tratando de negar a los 6.000 votantes venezolanos registrados que actualmente viven en Canadá la posibilidad de participar en las elecciones presidenciales venezolanas del domingo 20 de mayo. Esta es la última escalada en los ataques en curso del gobierno canadiense contra el gobierno democráticamente elegido del actual presidente venezolano, Nicolás Maduro.

Esta campaña comenzó con amenazas, pasó a sanciones económicas y también continuó con una declaración preventiva irracional de que las próximas elecciones presidenciales venezolanas no son libres ni justas incluso antes de que alguien haya emitido su voto.

Este domingo será el vigésimo cuarto evento electoral de Venezuela en 20 años. Incluso el ex presidente estadounidense Jimmy Carter, cuyo instituto ha observado muchas elecciones venezolanas, admitió que, "De hecho, de las 92 elecciones que hemos monitoreado, diría que el proceso electoral en Venezuela es el mejor del mundo "

Respaldamos por completo el anuncio del canciller venezolano, Jorge Arreaza, de que las misiones diplomáticas de Venezuela en Canadá continuarán estableciendo colegios electorales, independientemente de los continuos ataques del gobierno canadiense.

A medida que el gobierno canadiense y los medios dominantes continúan distorsionando y difamando al gobierno venezolano y al proceso electoral, Fire This Time está enviando a tres de sus propios reporteros al país para que presencien y denuncien de primera mano las elecciones presidenciales. Seguimos exigiendo el fin de todas las amenazas y sanciones contra el país soberano de Venezuela, y exigimos al gobierno canadiense que rescinda de inmediato su decisión de bloquear las mesas electorales en las misiones diplomáticas venezolanas en Canadá.

**U.S./Canada:  
¡Manos fuera de Venezuela!**



**WWW.FIRETHISTIME.NET**



**@FTT\_NP**



# CUBA CELEBRATES DAYS AGAINST HOMOPHOBIA WITH A CALL FOR EQUITY

(Havana, May 17) Cuba is celebrating today the International Day against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia with a call to promote respect for free sexual orientation and gender identity, as an exercise of justice and equity.

Under the slogan 'For schools without homophobia, or transphobia,' the activities related to the anniversary began since May 4 and they will be extended until tomorrow in the context of the 30th anniversary of the National Sex Education Center (CENESEX).

According to its director, Mariela Castro, the institution carries out an intense work for the rights of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex community and with support of the Cuban government.

'We have been taking learning from what has been done all this time. We have new proposals that do not consist in drawing up new laws, but, working on modifications of laws that already exist in our Constitution so they are more expeditious,' Castro said.

The program included spaces for community activities, academic and cultural exchange, and actions suitable to the exchange of experiences between activists and professionals.

The Cuban day against homophobia and transphobia was dedicated to the issue of harassment based on sexual orientation and



gender identification in educational centers.

The International Day against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia is celebrated on May 17 to commemorate the elimination of homosexuality in 1990 from the list of mental illnesses by the World Health Organization.

From: [www.plenglish.com](http://www.plenglish.com)



Con el lema 'Por escuelas sin homofobia, ni transfobia', desde el 4 de mayo comenzaron las actividades relacionadas con la efeméride y las mismas se extenderán hasta mañana en el contexto del 30 aniversario del Centro Nacional de Educación Sexual (Cenesex).

De acuerdo con la máxima responsable de esa entidad, Mariela Castro, la institución realiza un intenso trabajo por los derechos de la comunidad de lesbianas, gays, bisexuales, transexuales e intersexuales y cuenta con el apoyo del gobierno cubano.

'Todo este tiempo hemos estado sacando aprendizaje de lo hecho. Tenemos nuevas propuestas que no consisten en elaborar leyes nuevas, sino, trabajar en modificaciones de leyes que ya existen en nuestra Constitución para que sean más expeditas', puntualizó Castro.

El programa contempló espacios para las actividades comunitarias, el intercambio académico y cultural, acciones propicias para el intercambio de experiencias entre activistas y profesionales.

La jornada cubana contra homofobia y transfobia estuvo dedicada al tema del acoso por motivos de orientación sexual e identificación de género en los centros de enseñanza.

De acuerdo con especialistas del Cenesex, la violencia de este tipo en las escuelas afecta a todas las personas que están inmersas en esa situación: víctimas, victimarios y testigos.

Estos aseguran que las manifestaciones discriminatorias tienen un impacto significativo sobre la salud física, mental y el bienestar de la comunidad educativa y crean un clima de inseguridad, miedo y descontento en el círculo escolar.

Asimismo, disminuye la confianza en el personal educativo y en la institución, aumenta el riesgo de conductas autolesivas y obstaculiza la construcción de relaciones enriquecedoras y libres de prejuicios', opinaron los expertos.

El Día Internacional contra la Homofobia, la Transfobia y la Bifobia se celebra el 17 de mayo para conmemorar la eliminación de la homosexualidad en 1990 de la lista de enfermedades mentales por parte de la Organización Mundial de la Salud.

Desde: [www.prensa-latina.cu](http://www.prensa-latina.cu)

\* EN ESPAÑOL \*

## CELEBRAN EN CUBA JORNADA CONTRA LA HOMOFOBIA CON LLAMADO A LA EQUIDAD

(Habana, 12 de mayo) Cuba celebra el Día Internacional contra la Homofobia, la Transfobia y la Bifobia con un llamado a promover el respeto a la libre orientación sexual e identidad de género.



# 11<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL DAYS AGAINST HOMOPHOBIA & TRANSPHOBIA IN CUBA

As part of the activities to mark the 11th Cuban Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia, Havana saw a Gala celebration on Friday, and a huge parade on Saturday evening

A range of activities are being undertaken May 4 through 18, as part of the 11th Cuban Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia (Cuba's event to mark IDAHO - International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia).

Under the motto of "Me incluyo" (I include myself), this year's activities have been focused on raising awareness in schools and educational institutions regarding discrimination against the LGBTI community, working both with teachers and students.

On May 11, a cultural Gala was held in Havana's Karl Marx Theater, with performances by Cuban and international artists, who came to together to celebrate diversity and promote respect for different sexual and gender identities.

The Director of the National Center for Sex Education (CENESEX), Mariela Castro, presented an award to the British LGBT activist, Mike Jackson, who was portrayed in the multi-award winning film *Pride*, based on the true story of the beginnings of Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners (LGSM), set up by activists who raised money to help families affected by the British miners' strike in 1984.

Also awarded was Spanish actress Carla Antonelli, noted LGBT rights activist and the first trans person to serve in a legislature in Spain, as deputy to the Madrid Assembly for the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE).

Also announced was the posthumous award for Cuban journalist Isabel Moya, who served as director of the Editorial de la Mujer publishing house, until her recent death.

The evening saw a varied and highly artistic show with performances that had those gathered dancing, singing along and laughing.

Spanish actress Antonia San Juan, popularly known for playing Estela Reynolds in the series *La que se avecina* and assuming the role of a transsexual in Pedro Almodóvar's film *All About My*

Mother, performed a monologue that sparked cries of "Bravo!" laughter and applause.

Another impressive moment was the performance by dancer Zeleidy Crespo, of Acosta Danza, in the solo *Impronta*, by Spanish choreographer María Rovira, a piece dedicated to the Afro-Cuban deity Yemayá.

Popular Cuban singers Laritza Bacallao and Hayla María Mompié captivated the audience with their powerful vocals, while drag artists Margot, Ashenal, Deborah and Universo Picasso impressed.

The audience spontaneously took to its feet as a children's choir sung Silvio Rodríguez's classic "La era," also performed in sign language.

Meanwhile, Spanish vocalist Beatriz Luengo conquered the audience with "Más que suerte" and "Dime si ahora," as well as her own version of "Dos gardenias," the most famous piece by Cuban composer Isolina Carrillo. Cuban pianist Cucurucho Valdés masterfully accompanied the Spanish singer and actress, and also played the Cuban National Anthem "La Bayamesa."

The song "Cuba isla bella," by the group Orishas, closed the evening event held in Havana's Karl Marx Theater, sung by Laritza Bacallao, Hayla María Mompié, Alain Daniel, Diván, Project Voces and two of its composers, Beatriz Luengo and Yotuel Romero.

Also attending the Gala were Minister of Public Health, Roberto Morales, Secretary of the Council of State, Homero Acosta; the Ministers of Education and Higher Education, Ena Elsa Velázquez and José Ramón Saborido, respectively; among other government authorities.

## CONGA AGAINST HOMOPHOBIA AND TRANSPHOBIA

On the evening of Saturday, May 12, the streets of Havana were awash with color as the Conga Against Homophobia and Transphobia paraded along the central Linea Street, culminating in a concert featuring stars such as Los Van Van, in the José Antonio Echeverría recreational center.

The Conga saw Cubans and international guests celebrate diversity in a festive atmosphere, which drew the attention of passers-by and residents, in a proud display of sexual and gender identities.

*From: [www.granma.cu](http://www.granma.cu)*



**Mariela Castro, director of the Cuban National Center for Sex Education (CENESEX) alongside Mike Jackson of Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners (LGSM) at the Conga Against Homophobia and Transphobia.**



# ISRAEL'S CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY STOP KILLING INNOCENT PALESTINIANS!

*By Thomas Davies*

She was treating a protestor struck by a tear gas canister when the Israeli Defence Force (IDF) sniper's bullet ripped through her white medic's jacket and slammed into her chest. 21 year old Palestinian nurse and volunteer medic, Razan Al-Najjar died in a cloud of tear gas outside the Palestinian town of Khan Younis on the Gaza Strip. She was murdered on the same day the U.S. vetoed a resolution at the U.N. Security Council demanding an end to Israel's "shoot to kill policy" of firing on unarmed demonstrators in Gaza.

Israel has again accelerated its violence against Palestinians in the face of a widespread non-violent protest campaign titled "The Great March of Return." For more than two months the campaign has consistently mobilized thousands leading up to May 15, which marked 70 years since "the Nakba" (Catastrophe), when the state of Israel was proclaimed on Palestinian land and the ethnic cleansing of 750,000 Palestinians began.

The situation became even more drastic on May 14, when U.S. President Donald Trump's daughter and son-in-law held a ceremony to mark the provocative relocation of the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. Unarmed Palestinians protested at an Israeli-enforced, armed border and were massacred by the IDF. The Health Ministry in Gaza reported that the Israeli army had murdered 60 Palestinians and injured 2,771 in less than

24 hours.

In total, 111 Palestinians had been killed and 12,733 injured by the IDF during the campaign. Despite massive violence, Palestinians have continued to mobilize. Israel has responded by killing more Palestinians, including Razan.

## Why Gaza?

A 2012 U.N. report predicted the Gaza Strip would be "unliveable" by 2020 if nothing was done to ease the blockade – which Israel imposed ten years ago after the citizens of Gaza democratically elected the political party Hamas. Israel totally controls all land, air and sea entry to Gaza and severely restricts access to even food and construction materials.

The Norwegian Refugee Council Reports that, "Gaza is described by many Palestinians and humanitarian actors as the world's largest open-air prison, where 1.94 million Palestinians live behind a blockade and are refused access to the other occupied Palestinian areas and the rest of the world...1.6 million, or 84 percent, of the population in Gaza need humanitarian aid."

## What Does Israel Mean When it Says "Peace"?

The Israeli government has blamed the unarmed protestors for their own murders, calling the demonstrations at the border "acts of war" and self-exempting itself from human rights. The idea that a few thousand unarmed Palestinians pose a military threat to a nuclear weapons holding state which spends \$21.6 billion a year on the military is indeed a cynical spin.

In equally cynical maneuverings, Israeli Prime Minister



Last known photo of Razan Al-Najjar (on right) as she walks with her hands up towards an injured protestor

Benjamin Netanyahu continues to say Israel will "welcome, as always" peace negotiations with Palestinians. This happens as he also pledges to advance and approve 3,900 new Israeli settler units in the West Bank and destroy Palestinian villages to make the room.

## One State and 1948

The only real solution to the ongoing crisis is based in fundamental human rights. The hundreds of thousands of Palestinian refugees who were driven out in 1948, who have now grown into millions of displaced families, have the recognized "Right of Return" to their houses and homeland. It is also clear that the Zionist state of Israel, which is explicitly based on the rights of Jewish citizens above all others, comes at the direct expense of the human rights of Palestinians. A "two state" solution will never be viable because it is unable to solve those two huge human rights violations on which Israel is based.

Razan Al-Najjar and the tens of thousands of especially young Palestinians that risk death daily are proving that Israel cannot shoot its way out of the human rights crisis it has created for the past 70 years. One state, with equal rights, is the only viable solution. Those who say this is unrealistic must ask themselves what kind of sick status quo they are upholding, and what kind of demented peace they are really building. Palestinians have not given up their struggle for dignity and self-determination, and neither should we.



Follow Thomas on Twitter: @thomasdavies59

*By Janine Solanki*

For many, the island of Cuba brings up images of tropical beaches, classic cars, cigars and Havana Club rum. Although Cuba is a popular tourist destination, especially for Canada which has over a million tourists travel to the island each year, travelling to Cuba on a volunteer work brigade is an experience that goes far beyond any regular vacation!

With the Che Guevara Volunteer Work Brigade, one gets to see Cuba for themselves and make their judgments from firsthand experience. This year, the two-week brigade was from April 22 to May 6. In its 26th year, it was made up of 23 people from across Canada, including youth to young at heart, and all ages in between. The brigade is an annual project of the Canadian Network of Cuba, alongside the Cuban organization, the Cuban Institute of Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP).

This year the Che Guevara Brigade was hosted just outside of Havana, at ANAP's (the National Association of Small Farmers) Niceto Perez Garcia Camp in the small rural town of Güira de Melena. The brigade also spent a few days in the beautiful and historic central Cuban city of Camagüey. Alongside the experience of being with the Che Guevara Brigade, we were also incorporated into the larger May 1st brigade of almost 300 brigadistas from 32 countries. Every day we learned a bit more about not only Cuba, but also about the brigadistas home countries of Congo, Wales, Vietnam, Denmark, Chile, United States and many countries in between!

The volunteer aspect is different from year to year, and this year it was primarily harvesting

sweet potatoes under the direction of Cuban farmers. This experience is the chance to learn about the lives and work of Cuban farmers, their methods of organic agriculture, and about cooperative farming in Cuba!

Of course, a highlight of the trip was participating in Cuba's May 1st, International Workers Day. May 1st is a day of both celebration and struggle for working people around the world. In Cuba, May Day, or Primero de Mayo, is an experience like none other. In Cuba, where the highest honour one has is that of being a worker, May 1st is a day of celebration and revolutionary pride, encompassing the entire population of Cuba. The Che Guevara Brigade alongside the May 1st International Brigade was able to participate from Havana's Plaza of the Revolution, where we witnessed over one million people marching with their homemade signs or workplace banners, united to celebrate International Workers Day!

The following day the brigade participated in the annual international solidarity conference in Havana, again alongside international guests expressing their solidarity with Cuba and representing different struggles around the world.

After seeing all that Cuba stands for and is building within their society, we all go home understanding that Cuba is under attack and we have a responsibility to defend the Cuba that we have grown to love and respect. We now have our first-hand knowledge to combat the lies we hear about Cuba in the mainstream media. When we are protesting the U.S. blockade on Cuba and demanding the U.S. return Guantanamo to Cuba, it is with a deeper understanding of how these struggles impact Cuba on a day-to-day basis. But don't take our word for it – 2019 is coming up soon, and we hope it will be the year you travel to Cuba on the Che Guevara Volunteer Work Brigade!

*Follow Janine on Twitter: @janinesolanki*

## *Vancouver Celebrates "Palabras en el Mundo" Poetry Festival*

*By Janine Solanki*

On May 25, 2018, a special event was held as part of the "Palabras en el Mundo" (Words in the World) International Poetry Festival. In Vancouver, Canada this event was co-organized by Proyecto Cultural Sur – Vancouver and Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC). This annual evening of poetry, song, dance, and friendship was held in Burnaby's Central Park, among the peaceful trees and water. The setting of the event reflected the theme, which was dedicated to Mother Earth and to water, and to celebrating and protecting our natural environment.

Proyecto Cultural Sur – Vancouver is part of an international network which nurtures

Latin American culture by bringing people together to share poetry, music, and dance. The organization has worked together with Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba over several events, including on May 25, to create cultural events which bring together a broad group of people from the Latin American community and other diverse communities.

"Palabras en el Mundo" was emceed by Proyecto Cultural Sur President Lucy Ortiz, who invited up a number of people to share poetry as well as beautiful dances and songs. After an evening of sharing together, diplomas of participation were given to all who contributed their art and

everyone gathered together for a group photo with the beautiful natural backdrop of the park and under the open skies.

To find out more about this important cultural project, visit

<http://van.proyectoculturalsur.net>

## **The 2018 Ernesto Che Guevara Brigade**



## **VOLUNTEERING, REVOLUTIONARY POLITICS & FUN IN CUBA!**

sweet potatoes under the direction of Cuban farmers. This experience is the chance to learn about the lives and work of Cuban farmers, their methods of organic agriculture, and about cooperative farming in Cuba!

Of course, a highlight of the trip was participating in Cuba's May 1st, International Workers Day. May 1st is a day of both celebration and struggle for working people around the world. In Cuba, May Day, or Primero de Mayo, is an experience like none other. In Cuba, where the highest honour one has is that of being a worker, May 1st is a day of celebration and revolutionary pride, encompassing the entire population of Cuba. The Che Guevara Brigade alongside the May 1st International Brigade was able to participate from Havana's Plaza of the Revolution, where we witnessed over one million people marching with their homemade signs or workplace banners, united to celebrate International Workers Day!

The following day the brigade participated in the annual international solidarity conference in Havana, again alongside international guests expressing their solidarity with Cuba and representing different struggles around the world.

After seeing all that Cuba stands for and is building within their society, we all go home understanding that Cuba is under attack and we have a responsibility to defend the Cuba that we have grown to love and respect. We now have our first-hand knowledge to combat the lies we hear about Cuba in the mainstream media. When we are protesting the U.S. blockade on Cuba and demanding the U.S. return Guantanamo to Cuba, it is with a deeper understanding of how these struggles impact Cuba on a day-to-day basis. But don't take our word for it – 2019 is coming up soon, and we hope it will be the year you travel to Cuba on the Che Guevara Volunteer Work Brigade!

*Follow Janine on Twitter: @janinesolanki*





# Vancouver, Ottawa & Montreal demand: HEY TRUMP! LIFT THE BLOCKADE ON CUBA NOW!

By Janine Solanki

56 years ago, the US government implemented a cruel and unjust blockade against Cuba, with the intention of economically devastating Cuba and overthrowing its independent and sovereign socialist government; to bring Cuba back under US colonial control. Over 56 years later, much longer than any US President would have expected, Cuba is instead thriving as a country which provides renowned universal healthcare and education to its people and has advanced in many fields from the arts and sports to science and medical innovation.

Despite these great advancements, the US blockade on Cuba has a huge impact on Cuba's economy and the well-being of the Cuban people. According to Cuba's Mission to the United Nations, this cruel policy cost Cuba at least \$4.3 billion in the period between April 2016 to June 2017 alone. In addition to the blockade being in full force, the United States government continues its illegal occupation of the territory of Guantánamo Bay, Cuba and its hostile and aggressive policies against Cuba. In March 2018, President Trump signed the Congress budget deal, where the US government allocated \$20 million for subversive activities against Cuba camouflaged under the so-called "democracy programs."

Throughout over five decades, Cuba has never been alone and people around the world have rallied to support and defend Cuba's self-determination and right to

live without the economic strangulation of the US blockade. With US President Trump upholding the blockade and their cruel policies against Cuba, now more than ever actions and protests in defense of Cuba are necessary. In Vancouver, Ottawa and Montreal, Canada and Kiev, Ukraine, every 17<sup>th</sup> of the month protests are held in front of US embassies and consulates demanding an end to the US blockade.

On May 17, Friends of Cuba Against the US Blockade – Vancouver (FCAB-Vancouver) organized their monthly picket action in front of the US Consulate in downtown Vancouver. With signs and voices raised, protesters picketed and chanted "Hey Trump, Lift the Blockade!" and "Return Guantanamo to Cuba Now!" Between rounds of picketing, people gathered to hear from local speakers as well as to hear a phone message of solidarity from Ottawa Cuba Connections, who were also out in coordinated protest, in front of the US Embassy in Ottawa.

Month after month, in Vancouver, Cuba and around the world, activists are unifying their voices for an end to the US blockade on Cuba and the full normalization of US/Cuba relations! To find out more about FCAB – Vancouver's upcoming actions visit [www.vancubavblockade.org](http://www.vancubavblockade.org) or follow on Facebook and Twitter @NoBloqueoVan

Lift the Blockade on Cuba Now!  
Return Guantanamo to Cuba Now!

Follow Janine on Twitter: @janinesolanki



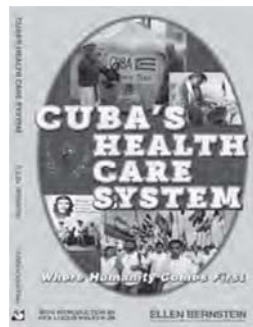
## Battle of Ideas Press

### CUBA'S HEALTH CARE SYSTEM WHERE HUMANITY COMES FIRST

BY ELLEN BERNSTEIN

*"The unfailing dedication of Cuban health care professionals has led to dramatic improvements in quality of life, for millions of people who previously had no other hope of receiving decent medical care. IFCO/Pastors for Peace is pleased to honor the diligent health care professionals of the Cuban health care system. We especially pay tribute to Cuba's national leadership, whose vision of universal health care as a right of every citizen sets an example for the world."*

Ellen Bernstein has served as Associate Director of the Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization (IFCO) since 2003. She has been a key staff member of IFCO's project Pastors for Peace, and has been deeply and integrally involved in IFCO's historic work with Cuba.

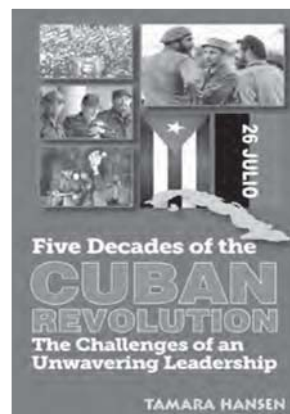


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## Battle of Ideas Press

### 5 Decades of the Cuban Revolution The Challenges of an Unwavering Leadership



By Tamara Hansen

Coordinator of Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC). She is also an editorial board member of The Fire This Time newspaper. She has travelled to Cuba over a dozen times and has written extensively on Cuban politics since 2003.

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# Vancouver's Working Group to Repeal Bill C51 & C59 continues to mobilize across the lower mainland!

*By Max Tennant & Thomas Davies*

As Spring came into full bloom in May, the Working Group to Stop Bill C-51 went into the streets in full force throughout the Lower Mainland of British Columbia, continuing to demand a repeal of "Secret Police" Bill C-51 and the scrapping of Bill C-59. After several months of a Parliamentary Committee on Bill C-59, it is clearer than ever that not only is Bill C-59 not a fix for Bill C-51, but this Committee is a farce attempting to legitimize further erosion of democratic and human rights.

Tim McSorley, National Coordinator of the International Civil Liberties Monitoring Group who participated in the Committee observed, "I sat through the hours of debate on each clause of the bill. Systematically, opposition motions were rejected, on often the flimsiest grounds. No amendments were made that didn't go in the direction that the government had already set out."

On May 7th, the Working Group went to 29th Avenue Station in South Vancouver for the first time. It was a great opportunity to meet and engage new people in this important campaign. Banner drops were also held in South and Downtown Vancouver during rush-hour traffic and were well-received by loud and constant honks. Two Australian tourists approached the downtown banner drop to thank the Committee for its work, "The government is doing the same thing in our country as well."

The Working Group also held an action at 22nd Street Station in New Westminster, which continues to be the one of the most receptive areas. The information table was constantly busy and there were many different discussions with workers and students. While at this station,

the Working Group had an important interview on a Spanish-English Radio Show "America Latina Al Dia" that provided a great opportunity to outreach to the local Latin American community.

As the month came to an end, the Government of Canada announced a \$4.5 billion purchase of the heavily opposed Kinder Morgan pipeline and

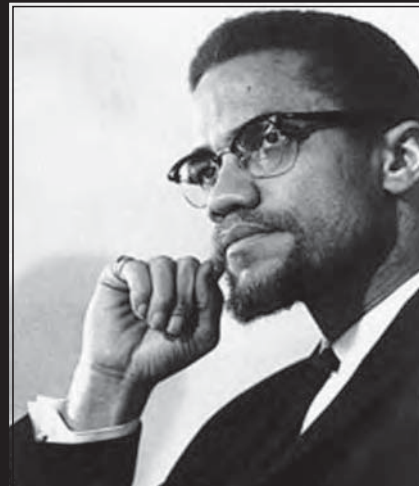


associated expansion project. It is no coincidence that Bill C-51's vague language allows the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) to prevent any person or group from "undermining the security of Canada," including "interference with critical infrastructure" and the "economic or financial stability of Canada". With this dangerous wording the government has authorized itself to target those organizing against the pipeline, or standing up for their rights in any number of other legitimate ways.

Next month will start with the 170th weekly action, which will also mark the infamous three year anniversary of the passing of Bill C-51. It is important to continue organizing and educating people in the streets to demand the repeal Bill C-51 and scrapping of Bill C-59. We must send a clear message to the Government of Canada that we will not allow our human and democratic rights to be trampled on.

*Follow Max on Twitter: @MaxTennant*

**"By Any Means Necessary..."**



## MALCOLM X SPEAKS

Interview by Stan Bernard on WINS Radio, New York  
February 18, 1965

**Stan Bernard:** Don't you incite, Malcolm? Don't you incite?

**Malcolm X:** I don't think so. How are you going to incite people who are living in slums and ghettos? It's the city structure that incites. A city that continues to let people live in rat-nest dens in Harlem and pay higher rent in Harlem than they pay downtown. This is what incites it. Who lets merchants outcharge or overcharge people for their groceries and their clothing and other commodities in Harlem, while you pay less for it downtown. This is what incites it. A city that will not create some kind of employment for people who are barred from having jobs just because their skin is black. That's what incites it. Don't ever accuse a black man for voicing his resentment and dissatisfaction over the criminal condition of his people as being responsible for inciting the situation. You have to indict the society that allows these things to exist. And this is where I differ with Dr. Hall.



The U.S. House of Representatives passed a resolution in late July 2008 apologizing to African Americans for the years of slavery they have suffered. This was the recognition by the U.S. of the injustice and inhumanity of the slave system and “Jim Crow”, as the period of intense racial discrimination between 1865, when slavery was officially abolished and the 1960s, was known.

At that time, the US political establishment was forced to take action against nefarious racial discrimination though, in some states more and in others less; it kept black citizens legally segregated from white people and limited their civil liberties, even denying them the right to vote. This legal segregation was more inhumane and violent in the southern states than in the northern United States.

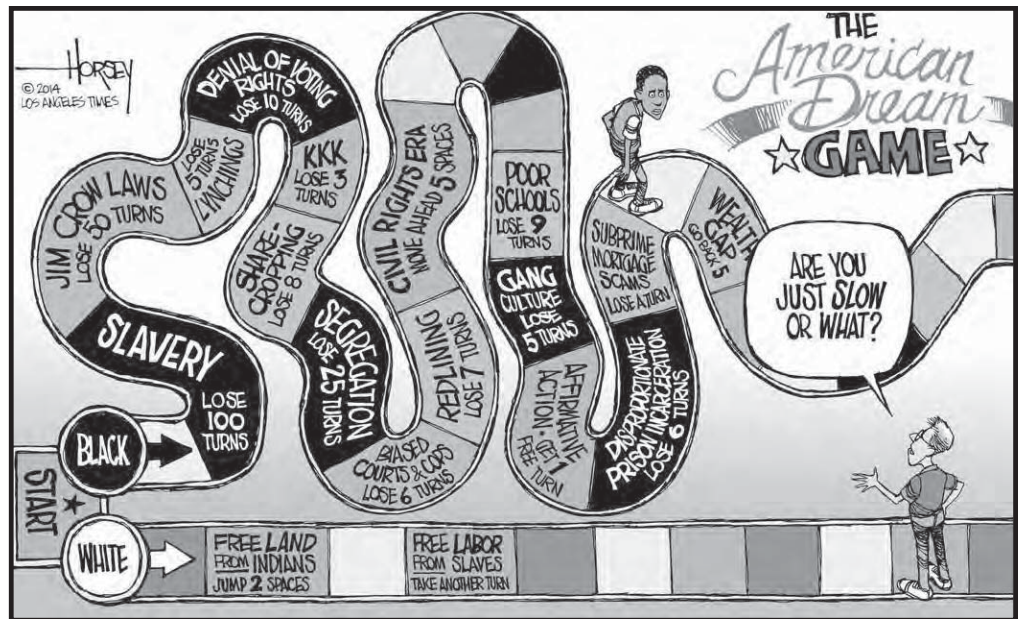
The name “Jim Crow” applied to that shameful period in American history belonged to a comedian and singer named Rice, who composed and performed the song “Jump, Jim Crow” in 1828, about a black servant who danced while brushing his master’s horse. It is not clear why the term “Jim Crow” began to be used to refer to any entity that practiced racial segregation: “Jim Crow laws”, “Jim Crow schools”, “Jim Crow buses”, etc.

There were workplaces, universities, taxis, trains, buses, boats, canteens, restaurants, hotels, hospitals, health services, water fountains, prisons, nursing homes, barbershops, public parks, sports fields, circuses, fairs, theatres, cinemas, concert or party halls, libraries, beaches, swimming pools, waiting rooms, telephone booths, workshops, lifts, brothels, lines, entrances to and exits from buildings. Everything could be ascribed to this form of US form of apartheid.

Segregation applied to marriage, professions, neighborhoods, churches and cemeteries. In some cities Jim Crow martial law was imposed and blacks could not go out on the street after a certain time of night. In the Jim Crow courts, whites swore with one hand on a Bible and blacks swore on a different copy of it.

Black people were excluded from most trade unions. They were not admitted to Jim Crow sororities, clubs and societies. Board games and sports involving physical contact between blacks and whites, including combat games such as boxing, were prohibited unless the opponent was a foreigner.

Add to this ignominious situation the violence with which the Ku Klux Klan, the members of the John Birch Society, the White Citizens’



## The U.S. Will Have To Ask For Forgiveness

Council and other elements of the American extreme-right were acting. It was a real white terrorist system!

In the face of such outrage, the struggle of Black Americans for their civil rights became increasingly intense. It generated such great personalities as Malcolm X and the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr., as well as hundreds of martyrs, remembered or anonymous, from Black Power organizations and others who, in the 1960s, gave birth to a situation that seemed to be a precursor to a revolution.

Although the fear of reprisals by the empire and its control of the media limited the international denunciation of these abuses and global solidarity, the triumph of the revolution in Cuba, the rise of anti-imperialism and the ideas of social justice in Latin America encouraged the just domestic struggle of Black people.

This coincided with the need for the recruitment of black soldiers for the asymmetrical imperialist war against Vietnam and all this forced the establishment to bury the Jim Crow.

For the sake of national security, the empire made major reformist “concessions” in race relations in a country where the law was white, white policemen, white judges, white mayors. And on film and TV screens, actors and actresses were white, and blacks were always represented in submissive and complacent attitudes.

Prior to this request for an apology from the

House of Representatives, the other branch of Congress, the Senate, passed another resolution in April 2008 apologizing for “the many cases of violence, abuse and neglect” suffered by Native Americans. The Senate also apologized in 1993 for the “illegal overthrow” of the Kingdom of Hawaii a hundred years earlier.

Yet humanity is still waiting for the U.S. to apologize and compensate so many nations on every continent whose democratic existence the U.S. has assaulted since it became an imperialist power in the early 20th century. And to do so with the promise to never again to intervene in the internal affairs of other nations, as well as to respect the human rights of their own citizens of other ethnicities and ways of thinking.

*Manuel E. Yepe, is a lawyer, economist and journalist. He was a professor at the Higher Institute of International Relations in Havana. He was Cuba's ambassador to Romania, general director of the Prensa Latina agency; vice president of the Cuban Institute of Radio and Television; founder and national director of the Technological Information System (TIPS) of the United Nations Program for Development in Cuba, and secretary of the Cuban Movement for the Peace and Sovereignty of the Peoples.*

*A CubaNews translation. Edited by  
Walter Lippmann.*

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Por Manuel Yepe

La Cámara de Representantes de Estados Unidos aprobó a finales de julio de 2008 una resolución por la que pidió disculpas a los afroamericanos por los años de esclavitud que han sufrido. Se trataba del reconocimiento por esa Cámara del Congreso de Estados Unidos de la injusticia y el carácter inhumano del sistema esclavista y el “Jim Crow”, como se conoce en esa nación al periodo de intensa discriminación racial comprendido entre 1865, cuando fue oficialmente abolida la esclavitud y los años 1960.

En ese lapso el establishment se vio forzado a tomar medidas contra la nefanda discriminación racial pero, en unos estados más y en otros menos, mantuvo a los ciudadanos negros legalmente segregados de la población blanca y limitadas sus libertades civiles, incluso sin el derecho a votar. Esa segregación legal fue más inhumana y violenta en los estados del Sur que en los del Norte estadounidense.

El nombre “Jim Crow” que se aplica a ese vergonzoso periodo de la historia estadounidense era el de un comediante y cantor de apellido Rice, quien compuso e interpretaba en 1828 la canción “Jump, Jim Crow” (“Salta, Jim Cuervo”), referida a un criado negro que bailaba mientras cepillaba el caballo de su amo. No está claro el motivo por el que el término “Jim Crow” comenzó a ser utilizado para aludir a cualquier entidad que practicara la segregación racial: “leyes Jim Crow”, “escuelas Jim Crow”, “tranvías Jim Crow”.

Había centros de trabajo, universidades, taxis, trenes, autobuses, barcos, cantinas, restaurantes, hoteles, hospitales, servicios sanitarios, bebederos de agua, cárceles, asilos, barberías, parques públicos, campos deportivos, circos, ferias, teatros, cines, salas de conciertos o de fiestas, bibliotecas, playas, piscinas, salas de espera, cabinas telefónicas, talleres, ascensores, burdeles, filas o colas,

entradas y salidas de los edificios. Todo era susceptible de asimilarse a esta forma del apartheid estadounidense.

La segregación se aplicó al matrimonio, a algunas profesiones, en los barrios, a iglesias y cementerios. En algunas ciudades se imponía la ley marcial Jim Crow y los negros no podían salir a la calle a partir de cierta hora de la noche. En los tribunales Jim Crow los blancos juraban con una mano sobre una Biblia y los negros lo hacían sobre un ejemplar distinto de ésta.

Los negros estaban excluidos de los sindicatos. No eran admitidos en hermandades, clubes y sociedades “Jim Crow”. Se prohibían los juegos de mesa y deportes en los que hubiera

Aunque el temor a las represalias del imperio y el control que ejercía éste sobre los medios limitaban la denuncia internacional de estos desmanes y la solidaridad global, el triunfo de la revolución en Cuba, el auge del antiimperialismo y las ideas de justicia social en América Latina incentivaron la justa lucha endógena de los negros.

Coincidió esto con la necesidad del reclutamiento de soldados negros para la asimétrica guerra imperialista contra Vietnam y todo ello obligó al establishment a enterrar el Jim Crow.

En aras de su seguridad nacional, el imperio realizó grandes “concesiones” reformistas en las relaciones interraciales de un país en el que la ley era blanca, los policías blancos, los jueces blancos, los alcaldes blancos y, en las pantallas cinematográficas y de TV, los actores y las actrices eran blancos, y los negros siempre eran representados en actitudes sumisas y complacientes.

Con anterioridad a esta solicitud de excusas formulada por la Cámara de Representantes, la otra rama del Congreso, el Senado, aprobó en abril de ese propio año 2008 otra resolución en la que se disculpaba por “los muchos casos de violencia, malos tratos y abandono” sufridos por los indígenas americanos. El Senado pidió también

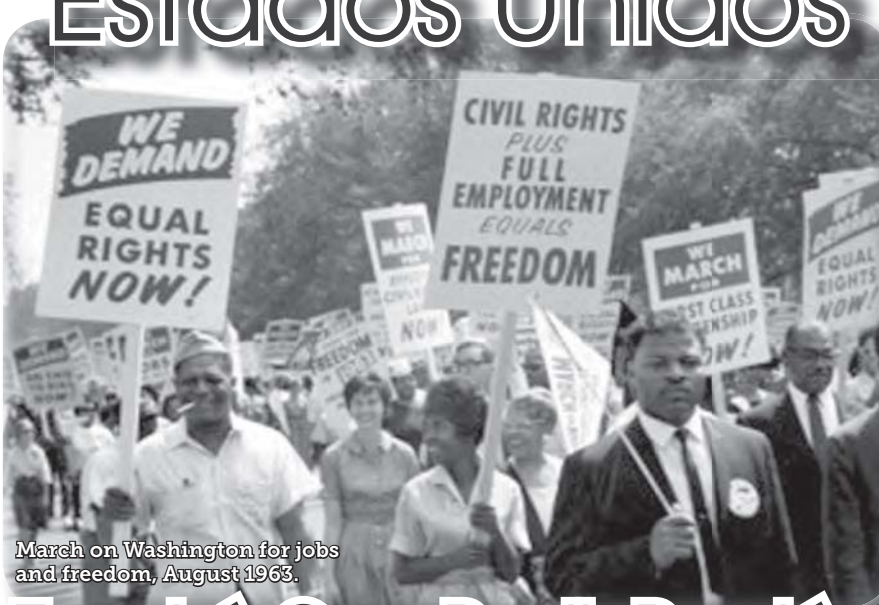
perdón en 1993 por el “derrocamiento ilegal”, cien años antes, del Reino de Hawái.

Sin embargo, la humanidad sigue en espera de que Estados Unidos exprese sus disculpas e indemnice a tantas naciones de todos los continentes cuya existencia democrática Estados Unidos ha asaltado desde que a inicios del siglo XX se convirtió en potencia imperialista. Y que lo haga con la promesa de nunca más intervenir en los asuntos internos de otras naciones, así como a respetar los derechos humanos de sus propios ciudadanos de otras etnias y formas de pensar. Mayo 17 de 2018.

*Manuel E. Yepe Menendez es periodista y se desempeña como Profesor adjunto en el Instituto Superior de las Relaciones Internacionales de La Habana.*

[www.manuelyepe.wordpress.com](http://www.manuelyepe.wordpress.com)

# Estados Unidos



March on Washington for jobs and freedom, August 1963.

# Tendrá Que Pedir Perdón

contacto físico de blancos y negros, incluyendo los de combate como el boxeo, salvo si el contrincante era un extranjero.

Agréguese a tan ignominiosa situación la violencia con que actuaban los Ku Klux Klan, los miembros de la John Birch Society, el Consejo de Ciudadanos Blancos y otros elementos de la extrema derecha estadounidense. ¡Un verdadero terrorismo blanco!

Frente a tanta afrenta, la lucha de los negros estadounidenses por sus derechos civiles se fue haciendo cada vez más intensa. Generó próceres de la talla de Malcolm X y del Reverendo Martin Luther King Jr, así como centenares de mártires, recordados o anónimos, de las organizaciones del Poder Negro y otras que en los años 1960 dieron cuerpo a una situación de apariencia precursora de una revolución.





**February 19, 1956  
~ May 31, 2018**

# **EAGLE EYES** **REST IN PEACE & POWER**

We all received the terrible news this week that after a long battle with several major health issues, Eagle Eyes has passed away. His family's songs, which he sang at the front of so many social justice actions, are still playing in our heads. We only knew Eagle Eyes in the last few years of his life, but in that time he made a deep impact on our work. He was a respected shísháhlh (Sechelt) elder, a survivor of the residential school system, and a leader by example.

There were weeks when we would see him practically every day at different actions and meetings. He would be up early in the morning and never home until late at night, using a cane more frequently as his illnesses progressively attacked his body. Climate justice, self-determination for indigenous nations, Cuba and Venezuela solidarity, anti-war actions, the fight for human and democratic rights - he approached them all the same way: with determination to win, and a mission to

connect the struggles and share protocol along the way.

We also knew him for his big smile and bigger dreams. One of those dreams he spoke of often was to organize a gigantic city-wide party when we defeated the Kinder Morgan pipeline. We are more determined than ever and to make this a reality, and to fight for the better world, he dedicated his entire life to.

Eagle Eyes will be with us every step of the way.



continued from page 15

have one goal in mind: to overthrow the government of President Maduro, reversing the gains made by poor, working and oppressed people under the last 20 years of the Bolivarian revolutionary process, and returning Venezuela to their control.

Over the last 20 years since the election of Hugo Chavez in Venezuela, the people of Venezuela have taken a stand for their sovereignty and self-determination. The Bolivarian revolutionary process has vastly improved the lives of the majority of the people of Venezuela. Together with revolutionary Cuba, Venezuela has led the way in building a new Latin America based on solidarity, and independent from U.S.-led, imperialist and colonial policies and organizations.

### Building Solidarity Is a Must!

U.S.-led threats against Venezuela are increasing: from the preposterous claim that the government of Venezuela has committed "crimes against humanity" submitted by the U.S.-based and funded Organization of American States (OAS) to the International Criminal Court; to Colombia's recent admission into the cold-war Western military alliance NATO, a direct threat not only to Venezuela, but to any movement fighting against imperialism in Latin America. The people of Venezuela and the Bolivarian revolutionary process are under a ceaseless and brutal assault, where as U.S. President Trump has said the "military option is on the table."

However, the May 20 elections have shown the world that the people of Venezuela will not be blackmailed or starved into following the orders of the United States. The people have voted to continue building the Bolivarian revolutionary process – and with it, they have voted in defense of their

sovereignty and self-determination. With the victory of President Maduro, they have told the world that will continue to stand up against the most powerful military force in the world and their dangerous allies – shouting loud and clear "Venceremos! - We will win!"

As people living in Canada, the U.S. and beyond we must stand with them in their struggle to end the criminal sanctions and all imperialist intervention in Venezuela. We have no option but to echo their demands and work to build a consistent, creative and united movement in solidarity with Venezuela. This means educating, organizing and mobilizing people in Canada and around the world in defense of Venezuela and against U.S./Canada/E.U. threats and sanctions. We also must look for allies in our struggle, in labour unions, community groups, students and poor and oppressed communities. We must do this because, for poor, working and oppressed people, Venezuela is an example of what it means to struggle, and to win. If the government of Venezuela and the Bolivarian revolutionary process is overthrown, it will be a huge set-back for all of us.

The government of Canada, the U.S. and the E.U. are increasing their attacks on Venezuela because they know that the people of Venezuela are only becoming more resolute in their determination to build a different future than one dictated to them from the north. It is our responsibility as people living in North America to do everything that we can to weaken the hands that are attempting to strangle them into submission. United we will win.

Follow Alison on Twitter: @Alisoncolette

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The opinions expressed in the newspaper are those of the authors, and do not necessarily represent those of Fire This Time.

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If you find Fire This Time to be an effective tool in the struggle of oppressed people for justice, more than ever, we need your support. On top of our regular costs of production, we regularly send members of our editorial board on assignment throughout North America, the Caribbean and beyond in order to make Fire This Time a better resource. These efforts have strained our finances.

If you would like to help with a donation, please make cheques payable to "Thomas Davies".

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**MONTHLY PICKET ACTION**

**LIFT THE U.S. BLOCKADE ON CUBA!**

**RETURN GUANTANAMO TO CUBA!**

**#NoMás Bloqueo**

**SUNDAY JUNE 17<sup>2018</sup>**

**U.S. CONSULATE @ 5PM**

**1075 W. PENDER ST**

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**Celebrating the 90th Anniversary of the Birth of Revolutionary Hero CHE GUEVARA**

**REPORT BACK FROM THE 2018 ERNESTO CHE GUEVARA VOLUNTEER WORK BRIGADE TO CUBA!**

**MUSIC • POETRY • BBQ**

**A FREE COMMUNITY EVENT**

**SATURDAY JUNE 23**

**TROUT LAKE PARK 6PM**

**3350 VICTORIA DR.**

**(NEAR CONCESSION - LOOK FOR CUBAN FLAGS)**

**QR CODE**

**VANCOUVER COMMUNITIES IN SOLIDARITY WITH CUBA - VCSC**

**778.882.5223 | @VanCuba\_VCSC**

**WWW.VANCUBASOLIDARITY.COM**

**RALLY & PETITION CAMPAIGN**

**MOBILIZATION AGAINST WAR & OCCUPATION - MAWO**

**US/UK/France/CANADA/NATO HANDS OFF THE MIDDLE EAST!**

**NO TO IMPERIALIST INTERVENTION!**

**HANDS OFF: YEMEN, SYRIA, IRAN, NORTH KOREA, IRAQ, PALESTINE, VENEZUELA, AFGHANISTAN, LIBYA & NORTH AFRICA!**

**CANADA CANCEL THE ARMS DEAL WITH SAUDI ARABIA NOW! NO TO ISLAMOPHOBIA! SELF-DETERMINATION FOR PALESTINE!**

**END THE OCCUPATION NOW! MONEY FOR JOBS, HEALTHCARE, EDUCATION, HOUSING & ENVIRONMENT! NOT FOR WAR AND OCCUPATION! RESIST IMPERIALIST WAR MONGERING! NO TO WAR & OCCUPATION! YES TO SELF-DETERMINATION! NO TO WAR & OCCUPATION! NO TO ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION! SELF-DETERMINATION FOR INDIGENOUS NATIONS!**

**INDEPENDENCE, SOVEREIGNTY & SELF-DETERMINATION FOR ALL OPPRESSED NATIONS!**

**NO TO WAR AND OCCUPATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST!**

**FRIDAY JUNE 15<sup>2018</sup> 5PM**

**VANCOUVER ART GALLERY (ROBSON & HOWE)**

**DOWNTOWN VANCOUVER, CANADA**

**MOBILIZATION AGAINST WAR & OCCUPATION @MAWOVAN**

**WWW.MAWOVANCOUVER.ORG**

**U.S./CANADA HANDS OFF VENEZUELA!**

**NO REGIME CHANGE IN VENEZUELA!**

**FRIDAY JUNE 8<sup>2018</sup>**

**1. PROTEST ACTION 4PM**

**> U.S./CANADA HANDS OFF VENEZUELA!**

**US CONSULATE IN VANCOUVER - 1070 WEST PENDER ST.**

**2. INFO TABLING & PETITION 5:30PM**

**> NO MORE U.S./CANADA SANCTIONS & THREATS!**

**> RESPECT THE SELF-DETERMINATION OF VENEZUELAN PEOPLE!**

**VANCOUVER ART GALLERY - ROBSON ST. AND HOWE ST.**

**FIRE THIS TIME - VENEZUELA SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN**

**WWW.FIRETHISTIME.NET**